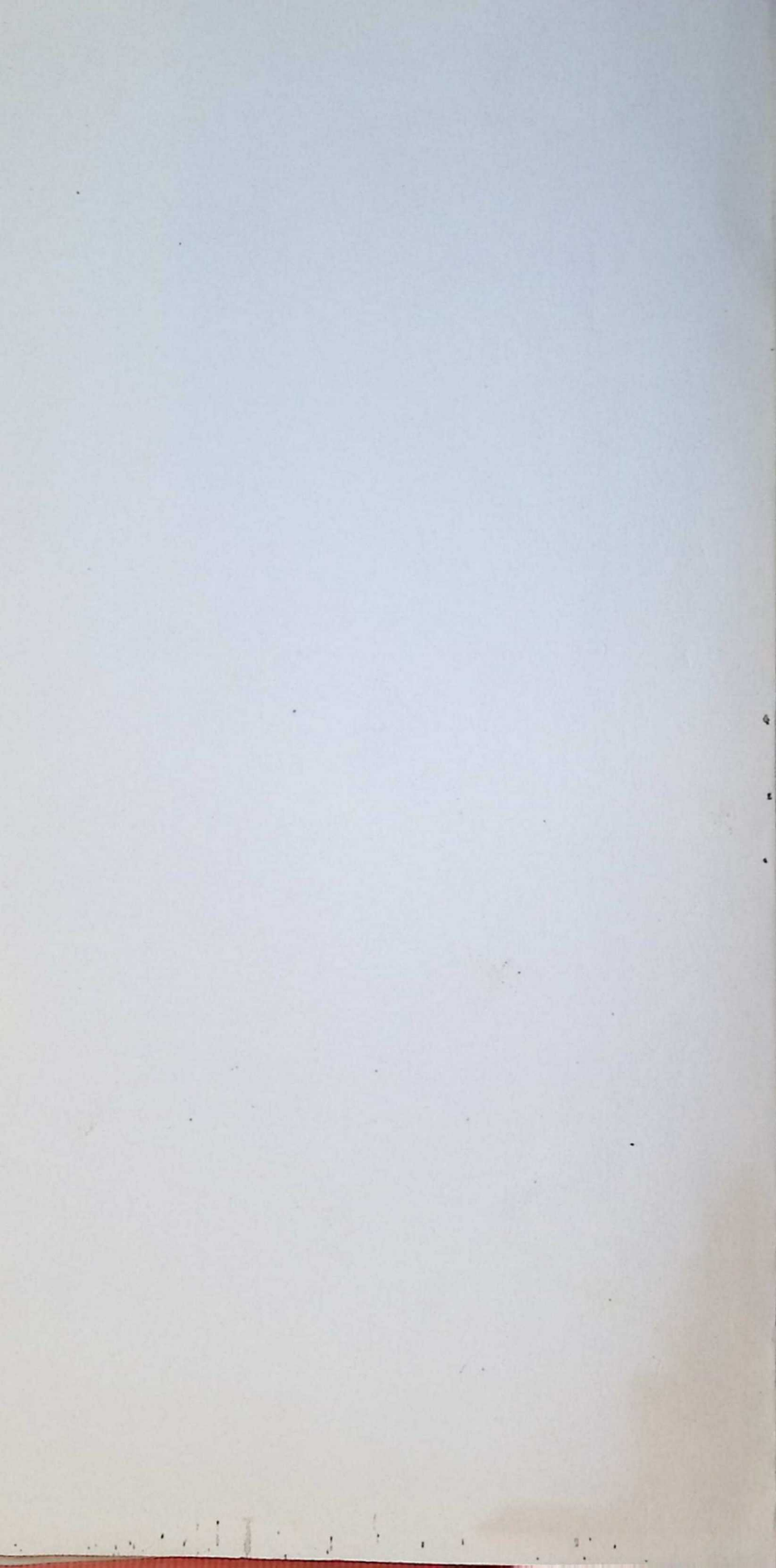


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LECTURES PAPERS

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APOLOGETICS.

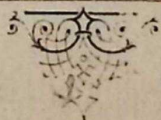
A SYLLABUS AND AN EPITOME OF LECTURES ON  
ATHEISM, AGNOSTICISM, PANTHEISM AND  
EVOLUTION.

BY PROF. H. C. ALEXANDER,

Union Theological Seminary,

IN

VIRGINIA.



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# Apologetics.

## ATHEISM.

(AN EPITOME.)

1

1. INFIDELITY is the denial, or persistent doubt, of *the fact* and, of course, of the Evidence of Revealed Religion.

3. Under this head fall Atheism, Polytheism, Dualism, Deism (or Nanturalism in its highest form), Pantheism, Positivism, Agnosticism, and Skepticism.

3. Atheism is the denial of God's existence; Polytheism, of His *unity*; Dualism, even if not Pantheistic, involves a denial of God's *independence*; Pantheism is the denial of God's *personality* and essential *distinctness* from the world; Agnosticism [or less properly, Positivism] in the broad sense is the denial of God's *knowableness*. Skepticism (where not a merely philosophic term, or a mild term for Infidelity in general, or the more decent forms of it) is a serious and persistent *doubting* on one or all of these points,

4. Materialism is the denial of the world of *mind*; and falls logically under the head of Atheism.

5. Idealism is the denial of the world of *matter*; and as commonly defined, falls logically under the head of Pantheism. The subtelest form of so-called Materialism is however so near akin to Idealism as to be logically undistinguishable from it. Honest *theists* too have sometimes

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# Apologetics.

## ATHEISM.

(AN EPITOME.)

2

denied the existence of matter. Some avowed theists would resolve all existence into force, and all force into the energy of spirit. The logical tendencies of Idealism are always Pantheistic, and even Nihilistic.

6. Nihilism is the denial [when not a Socio-political term] of both worlds, that of matter and that of mind; and of course involves Atheism.

7. Atheism is theoretical or practical: veritable or virtual; dogmatic or tacit.

8. Practical atheism is but a name for wickedness, and virtual atheism a name for any of the forms of unbelief which may be logically reduced to atheism proper. Tacit atheism, is atheism disguised and masked.

9. We have to do with *theoretical and veritable* [i. e. actual—real atheism] and (strictly speaking) only in the *dogmatic* form.

10. Bacon would rather believe all the silly stories in the Talmud and the Koran, than *be an atheist*.

11. The *temerity* of the avowed atheist equals his credulity. The proverbial difficulty of substantiating a negative proposition (e. g. Wild flowers—Saturn and rings) is here infinitely enhanced by the immense (and impossible) research required to justify the averment that there is no God.

# Apologetics

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF THE CASE

THE first question which presents itself to the mind of the reader is, what is the nature of the case which is to be defended?

The answer is, that it is the case of the Christian religion, and of the truth of its doctrines.

The second question is, what is the nature of the objections which are made against it?

The answer is, that they are of two kinds: first, objections to the truth of its doctrines; secondly, objections to the utility of its doctrines.

The third question is, what is the nature of the evidence which is offered in its defence?

The answer is, that it is of two kinds: first, evidence to the truth of its doctrines; secondly, evidence to the utility of its doctrines.

The fourth question is, what is the nature of the objections which are made against the evidence?

The answer is, that they are of two kinds: first, objections to the truth of the evidence; secondly, objections to the utility of the evidence.

The fifth question is, what is the nature of the evidence which is offered in answer to these objections?

The answer is, that it is of two kinds: first, evidence to the truth of the evidence; secondly, evidence to the utility of the evidence.

The sixth question is, what is the nature of the objections which are made against this evidence?

The answer is, that they are of two kinds: first, objections to the truth of the evidence; secondly, objections to the utility of the evidence.

The seventh question is, what is the nature of the evidence which is offered in answer to these objections?

The answer is, that it is of two kinds: first, evidence to the truth of the evidence; secondly, evidence to the utility of the evidence.

The eighth question is, what is the nature of the objections which are made against this evidence?

The answer is, that they are of two kinds: first, objections to the truth of the evidence; secondly, objections to the utility of the evidence.

The ninth question is, what is the nature of the evidence which is offered in answer to these objections?

The answer is, that it is of two kinds: first, evidence to the truth of the evidence; secondly, evidence to the utility of the evidence.

The tenth question is, what is the nature of the objections which are made against this evidence?

The answer is, that they are of two kinds: first, objections to the truth of the evidence; secondly, objections to the utility of the evidence.

The eleventh question is, what is the nature of the evidence which is offered in answer to these objections?

The answer is, that it is of two kinds: first, evidence to the truth of the evidence; secondly, evidence to the utility of the evidence.

The twelfth question is, what is the nature of the objections which are made against this evidence?

The answer is, that they are of two kinds: first, objections to the truth of the evidence; secondly, objections to the utility of the evidence.



# Apologetics.

## ATHEISM.

(AN EPITOME.) = about all of you get

12. John Foster argues that dogmatic atheism could only *in the* be properly tolerated in one who possessed the Divine attributes. Otherwise the atheist might lack just the information required to warrant his awful assertion. *itself*

13. Robert Hall and Thomas Chalmers approved both the rhetoric and logic of Foster in this argument. Dr. Thornwell admired the beauty of the presentation, but denied the validity of the argument itself; this he did on the ground that God is Omnipresent and manifests himself in every spot.

14. Foster's logic appears sound. Remember it is only *ad hominem*, and to show up the effrontery of the man who denies a *great first cause*. We go beyond this vague admission, and hold to the Jehovah of the Scriptures. We believe (1) that a great first cause *exists*, (2) that he is *ubiquitous*, and (3) that he is everywhere *manifest*.

But surely *It would be more reasonable to admit the possibility* (1) might be affirmed, or at any rate questioned (or at least *existence of a first great cause (even though* not denied), and at the same time (2) and (3) ignorantly *not ubiquitous) or at any rate of a great* given up.

*Ubiquitous first cause who was not only* 15. Atheists (sincere or insincere) were scarce in antiquity, *wherey manifest their to deny the possibility* but rife before, during, and since the Reign of Terror.

*of a great first cause anywhere.*





# Apologetics.

## ATHEISM.

(AN EPITOME.)

4

16. D'Holbach, Vogt, and Haeckel, may be cited as examples.

17. The arguments for the being of a God are the *a priori*, and the *a posteriori*.

18. The *a priori* argument is associated with the names of such men as Augustine, Anselm, Clarke; and are mostly realistic, or else involve the *a posteriori*, and are at best not very convincing.

19. The *a posteriori* argument includes the cosmological, teleiological, historical, and moral or religious, arguments. They are all valid, so far as mere rational arguments can avail. The arguments against the eternity of matter, and "the infinite *series*" fall under this head.

20. The stupidity of the Atheist follows: (1) From the ascertained fact that there is a God; (2) From the temerity of the man who in the absence of proof to the contrary should venture to *assert* that there is no God; (3) From the obvious and absolute *necessity* for a God; (4) From the transparency of the motive that leads to the denial of a God: (5) From the utter inability of man consistently to reduce to practice the theoretic dogma that there is no God.

*Read Nelson on Infidelity*

# Apology

James

1847. 2. 27. 1847.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st inst.

and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,

J. H. [Signature]

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st inst.

and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,

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I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st inst.

and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,

J. H. [Signature]



*...of which the church is infidelically without.*

# Apologetics.

## Lecture I.

### ATHEISM,

#### (A SYLLABUS)

1

ATHEISM—The denial of the fact (and therefore of the evidence), of Revealed Religion is INFIDELITY. The denial of the Divine Existence is ATHEISM. The denial of the Divine individual Personality is PANTHEISM. The denial of the Divine Independence is DUALISM. The denial of the Divine supernatural Interference is DEISM. The denial of the Divine Scrutability is POSITIVISM; [or AGNOSTICISM]. The denial of all existence is Nihilism.

Serious and presistent *doubt* as to these points, or as to one or more of them, is religious Skepticism.

We take up ATHEISM, or the denial of Great First Cause, under which head we shall also consider briefly AGNOSTICISM [the system which is equivalent to Positivism in the wide sense, and includes Positivism in the strict or narrow sense] or the denial that the first cause is *knowable*.

~~[We here treat of these topics under the same head partly for convenience, and partly because Agnosticism is commonly only a disguised form of Atheism. Bacon says "I would rather believe all the fables in the Legend, the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind." Audacity of such a denial. Difficult to know (and therefore, to prove), a negative. [e. g. Footprint in sand. Wild flowers. Planet with rings.].~~





# Apologetics.

## Lecture I.

### ATHEISM,

#### (A SYLLABUS)

2

John Foster holds that a man must have the divine attributes himself (e. g. immensity and omniscience), in order to be warranted to deny that there is a God.

[Foster's argument approved by Robert Hall and Chalmers].

Thornwell pronounces Foster's argument invalid. Thornwell does this on the ground that the Atheist would be justified in his Atheism if he could find a single spot without the manifestations of a deity. Foster, however, is vindicated by the consideration, that his argument is *ad hominem*, that it were quite possible to hold *sub judice*, or even admit the existence of, a First Cause, and at the same time (on the assumption of his existence) question the fact of his *universal*, or universally convincing, manifestations: He might conceivably manifest himself in one place, not in another, in Jupiter, say, and not in Mars. To deny the ubiquity of God is one thing, to deny the obviousness of the divine presence is quite another thing. But even the denial of God's ubiquity is not necessarily a denial of his existence, except on the definition that makes ubiquity one of the divine attributes. In other words, the two propositions are distinct—A There is a First Cause—B The existence of a First Cause, (if there be a First Cause), must be everywhere evident. B is true as well as A, but a man ought to give up B sooner than give





Deists Tom Paine, Hume, men of 18<sup>th</sup> century, Voltaire,  
Rousseau,  
Atheists 19<sup>th</sup> c. Prof. Clifford, Vogt, Haeckel.

## Apologetics.

### Lecture I.

#### ATHEISM,

#### (A SYLLABUS)

3

up A. But if Foster's argument is sound, (and in any case), the Atheist's structure falls, and he is seen to be the most credulous of men.

Thomas

Some (e. g. Addison and Arnold) have questioned whether there ever was, or ever can be, a conscientious Atheist. Bacon affirms the rarity of Atheists up to his time, and thinks Atheism is mostly in the lip. rather than (in) the heart. and argues from their dying for it that the Atheists are *insincere*.

He points out the difficulty of substantiating the charge of being an Atheist.

Cicero reminds the Romans that their glory was their faith in the gods. In our day it may be said that professed Atheists (even in the narrowest and strictest sense of the term) have been found in considerable numbers,

In ancient times we can point to but few. Bacon says "a Diagoras, a Bion, a Lucian perhaps." Modern Atheists were rife in France just before and during the Revolution of 1789; e. g. the men of "the Encyclopædia of Science:" D'Alembert, Diderot, and D'Holbach. [These preceded the Revolution.]

The Baron D'Holbach in his "*Système de la nature*" deliberately resolves all mind into matter: *ergo*, no God. (Pure materialism.)

# Apologies

Lesson I

ATTITUDE

IN SPEAKING

up. But if I have a right to be heard in any way, the Attorney's attitude is the one that he is to be the most

of course, as Addison and Arnold have pointed out, whether there ever was or not, but a consideration of the fact that the very of Addison up to the time and that Addison is mostly to the right, rather than for the best, and argues from the fact that the Attorney was mistaken.

The point of the difficulty of understanding the change of being an Attorney.

I now mention the fact that the Attorney was not in the room. In our day it is not so much that the Attorney was not in the room, but that the Attorney was not in the room.

In our day it is not so much that the Attorney was not in the room, but that the Attorney was not in the room. In our day it is not so much that the Attorney was not in the room, but that the Attorney was not in the room.

The fact is that the Attorney was not in the room. In our day it is not so much that the Attorney was not in the room, but that the Attorney was not in the room.



# Apologetics.

## Lecture I.

### ATHEISM,

#### (A SYLLABUS)

4

By Atheism we must mean either that which is *practical* or that which is *theoretical*. Our business in this course is wholly with *theoretical* Atheism. *practical* Atheism is only another name for ungodliness or hypocrisy. Atheism (theoretical) may either be *virtual*, or else *real* Atheism.

*Virtual* Atheism is but a name for other forms of infidelity, which are logically reduceable to Atheism.

Atheism (real) then may be embraced under two heads, I. *Dogmatic* Atheism: and II. *Tacit* Atheism.

Dogmatic (or self-avowed) Atheism, is Atheism proper, Atheism in the strict sense, and has already been discussed.

*Tacit Atheism* is Atheism that is conscious of itself, but does not show its hand.





# PANTHEISM.

## ARGUMENTS AGAINST PANTHEISM. 1

1. Every rational argument in favour of a *personal God* is an argument against all the *usual* forms of Pantheism.
2. Every rational argument for each man's own separate *personal individuality* is an argument against Pantheism. Self-consciousness protests against it.
3. The argument in favour of Pantheism that the idea of personality involves a *limitation* of the infinite, is a sophism based on a *mathematical* view of the infinite.
4. Such an argument would logically require the non existence either of the *infinite* or of the *finite*, and either horn of this dilemma would be absurd.
5. If such an argument were to stand, Pantheism would be stultified; for even the phenomenal distinction between a world of matter and a world of mind, which is universally conceded, would similarly involve a limitation of the infinite.
6. The figment that God is a person, and yet in some way essentially identified with the world, is repugnant to the doctrine of Creation *ex Nihilo*, which doctrine is demanded by enlightened reason.
7. Pantheistic idealism has historically run itself out into Nihilism. This is worse than Atheism itself, and confounds common sense.
8. Pantheistic Nihilism (especially in its Hegelian form) is logically, as well as historically, based on Mediaeval *Realism*. But Realism is false, and *Nominalism* or Conceptualism the true view.
9. Thus, in various ways, Pantheism is at war with consciousness, contradicts the first principles of reason, and thus leads to Pyrrhonism.
10. Pantheism is irreconcilable with the true meaning of the word of God.



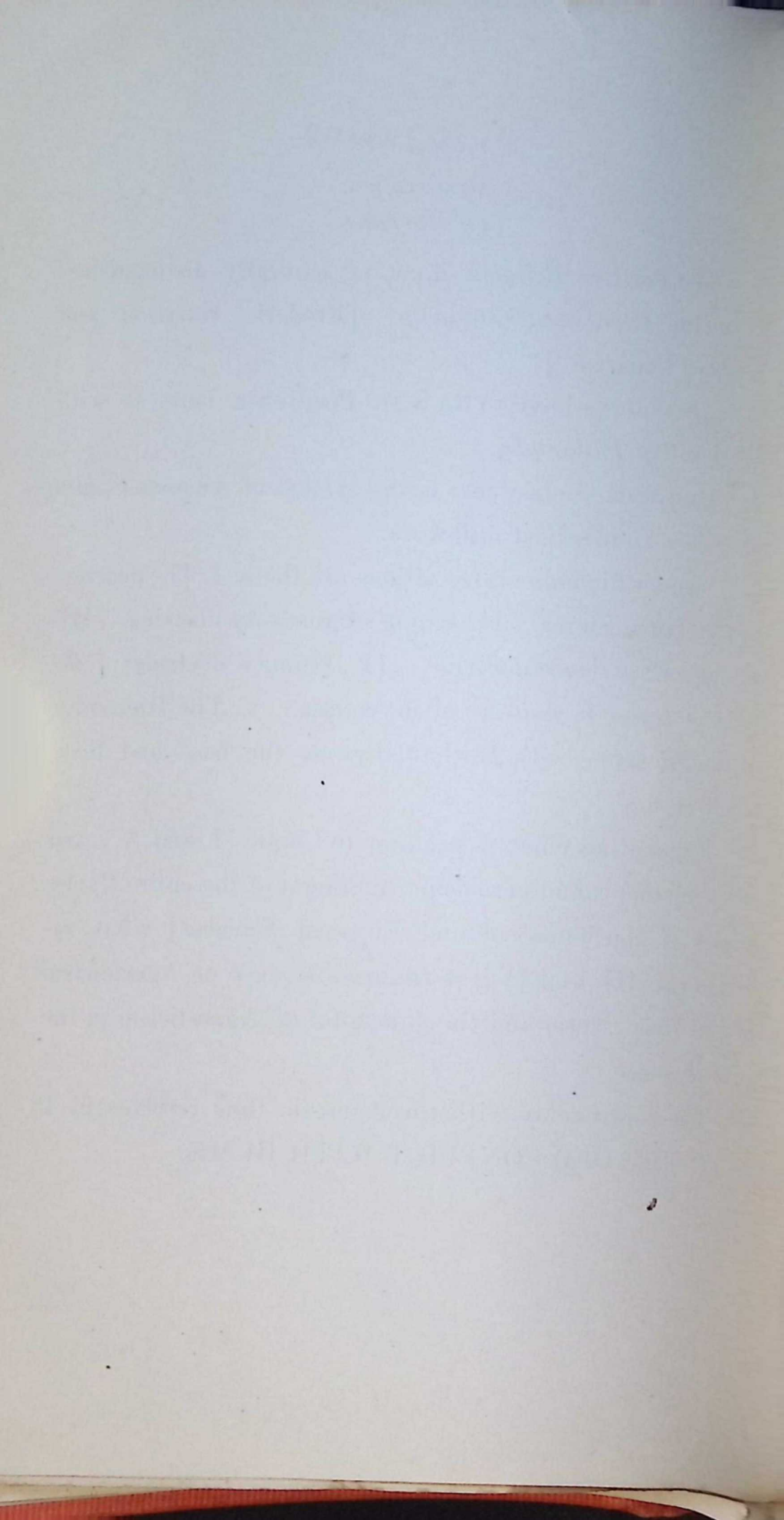


# Apologetics.

## AGNOSTICISM.

(AN EPITOME.)

1. The Positive *Religion* must be carefully distinguished from the Positive *Philosophy*. [Frederic Harrison and Richard Congreve.]
2. All that we have to do with Positivism here, is with the Positive *Philosophy*.
3. Positivism in strictness is the system of Auguste Comte and his acknowledged followers.
4. Comte's fundamental positions are these: I. The doctrine of the Three States. II. Hume's Causeality doctrine. III. Hume's Experience doctrine. IV. Hume's doctrine of *the folly of trying to find out* about causes. V. The Hierarchy of the Sciences—with Mathematics at the base and Sociology on top.
5. Eliminating what is peculiar to Comte [I. and V., and his voluminous and erroneous treatment of the entire Cyclopædia of Mathematical and Physical Sciences] what remains [II. III. and IV.] is the quintessence of Agnosticism in the broad sense, and the sum total of Agnosticism in the narrow sense.
6. The controversy with the Agnostic thus resolves itself INTO THE OLD CONFLICT WITH HUME.





# Apologetics.

## AGNOSTICISM.

(AN EPITOME.)

2

7. But Hume's theory has been over and over again refuted. *Ergo.*, Agnosticism has a ruinous logical foundation.

8. Spencer, indeed, seeks comfort in Hamilton's alleged doctrine of an unknowable God. But Hamilton is not explicit, and far from unambiguous; and Mansel [his christian pupil who interprets him in this sense] has demonstrably assumed an untenable and dangerous position. Besides Hamilton and Mansel were both theists and (as Kant did before them) held that the certainty which fails us in the form of knowledge, does not fail us in the form of faith.

9. The first grand argument against Agnosticism is that it does not follow from its own premises.

10. There are two kinds of Agnosticism. One admits, or even insists on the *being* of a God. but allows no knowledge of his nature. [Fiske, and perhaps Spencer.] The other (and the pure and unadulterated kind) allows no knowledge either of his nature or his being. [Comte, Mill, and Darwin.]

11. The first kind of Agnosticism is inconsequential. To ascribe "reality" to anything, and write it "Power" and "Cause," is to unfold to some extent its *nature*. The

# Psychology

Introduction

1. The Science of the Mind

The study of the mind and behavior is a complex and multifaceted discipline. It seeks to understand the internal processes that govern our thoughts, feelings, and actions, as well as the external factors that influence these processes. Psychology is a science that uses systematic methods to investigate the mind and behavior, and it has a long history of contributing to our understanding of the human condition. The field of psychology is divided into many sub-disciplines, each of which focuses on a specific aspect of the mind and behavior. These sub-disciplines include cognitive psychology, which studies the processes of perception, learning, and memory; developmental psychology, which examines how the mind and behavior change over the course of a person's life; clinical psychology, which focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders; and social psychology, which explores the influence of social factors on individual behavior. Psychology is a dynamic and ever-evolving field, and it continues to make significant contributions to our understanding of the human mind and behavior. The study of psychology is not only intellectually stimulating, but it also has practical applications in many areas of life, including education, health care, and the workplace. By understanding the mind and behavior, we can better understand ourselves and others, and we can use this knowledge to improve our lives and the lives of others.



# Apologetics.

## AGNOSTICISM.

### (AN EPITOME.)

3

second, and logically considered the more plausible, kind of Agnosticism, is also utterly inconsequential—at least in any of the current exhibitions that we have of it. [Mill and Madagascar.] Even on strictly Agnostic principles, the Theistic rather than the Atheistic, or Pantheistic, solution may well turn out hereafter to be the true one.

12. The second grand argument against Agnosticism is that its premises are *false*, and its conclusion is monstrous. [Mansel and Hume were themselves wrong, and the perversion of Mansel and especially Hamilton, has already been pointed out].

13. Aside from Spencer's cry to "Cassius" [Hamilton], the entire groundwork of Agnosticism (as we have seen) is the Empirical Philosophy of Hume. (Destroyed by Reid and Kant].

14. Hume's *didactic* position that all our knowledge is from sensible experience, leads remorselessly to Hume's *skeptical* position, viz: that of the invalidity of all our knowledge.

15. The true upshot of the Agnostic premises is therefore not the so-called Agnosticism itself but stark *pyrrhonism*.





# Apologetics.

## AGNOSTICISM.

### (AN EPITOME.)

4

[This point might have been made under the former head; but is urged *here* as a tremendous *reductio ad absurdum*].

16. The lunacy of Pyrrhonism is evident. It is the death of all sane argument.

17. The vindication of Theism as against Agnosticism thus resolves itself into a vindication of the Intuitive Philosophy and of the true doctrine of Causality.

18. The Empirical *metaphysics* is as faulty as the Empirical logic.

19. Metaphysics is the base of all true sciences; and is the only science that does not borrow its own postulates [Bowen], and (I may add) borrow them from metaphysics.

20. The only argument for Empiricism (leaving out the appeal to "Cassius") is this, viz: that "Science" has failed to ascertain the reality of spiritual *phenomena*.

21. The falacy is in the word "*science*." In one sense the statement is true but irrelevant: in the other, it begs the question.

22. There is, indeed, a *scriptural* Agnosticism ("Touching the Almighty" &c.).

# Appendix

1870-1871

1872-1873

The first of the two years under the year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country. The year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country. The year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country.

The second of the two years under the year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country. The year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country. The year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country.

The third of the two years under the year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country. The year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country. The year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country.

The fourth of the two years under the year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country. The year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country. The year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country.

The fifth of the two years under the year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country. The year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country. The year 1870-1871 was a year of unusual activity in the history of the country.



# Apologetics.

AGNOSTICISM.

(*AN EPITOME.*)

5

23. But the so-styled Agnosticism of the day is a base delusion, as well as a hypocritical sham. It spoils both time and eternity. It virtually (or really) denies God, the Soul, Immortality, Sin, the Judgment, the Resurrection, the Life Everlasting; and aims to eclipse that religious faith which is "the last restraint of the powerful, the last hope of the wretched." [Macaulay.]





# Apologetics.

AGNOSTICISM.

(A SYLLABUS.)

1

Comte's dotting *religion*, must be carefully distinguished from his *philosophy*. Dr. Richard Congreve, of London, is now the main support of "the *Positive Religion*."

Comte advocated his religious system in a separate work, *LA POLITIQUE POSITIVE*. The absolute Idealism of Hegel and the Relative Materialism of Comte agree in attempting to reduce God to zero and then recreate him in the form of an idol, or godling, named Man.

We shall now confine ourselves to Positivism in the philosophic sense.

Strictly speaking, Positivism is the philosophic and scientific system of Auguste Comte. It has become common however to extend the application of the term positivist to the others besides the immediate followers of Comte who agree with him in his fundamental positions in regard to the definition of cause, the experience doctrine as to the source of human knowledge, and *the futility of all research after first or final causes*. This usage is distinctly recognized by such writers as Dr. McCosh, Prof. Bowen, and Mr. Mallock.

In this broad (and somewhat improper) sense Positivism is *the same* with Agnosticism. In the narrow and strict sense Positivism is only *one kind of* Agnosticism.

Comte's fundamental positions are the five following, viz:—

- I. The doctrine of the Three States of the Human Understanding, or the three successive states of human progress.
- II. The doctrine of Causality, advocated by Hume, which resolves the notion of *causation* into that of *invariable antecedence*.
- III. Hume's doctrine that all our knowledge is derived from



# Apologetics.

AGNOSTICISM.  
(A SYLLABUS.)

2

*sensible experience.*

IV. The doctrine, that enquiry after first and final *causes* is necessarily fruitless, and that the philosopher must be content to ascertain and classify *laws*.

V. The Hierarchy of the Sciences.

Of these several positions, the first and last are the only ones that are peculiar to Comte and his immediate disciples

If then we should eliminate the first and last of these statements, the core of the system would remain intact, and be found to consist of three propositions which are affirmed by none but Agnostics and which all Agnostics affirm.

These interior or central propositions are these: First, Hume's Causality Doctrine. Second, Hume's Experience Doctrine. Third, Hume's Doctrine of the Futility of Searching for Ultimate Efficient and Final Causes; applied in a somewhat new way to the determination of physical and transcendental research. So that our whole quarrel with the Agnostic is at last but the old quarrel with David Hume.

These three propositions constitute the core of the entire system big and little; the key-stone of the inner and the outer arch.

Grant the experience doctrine, and the Causality Doctrine follows by course of logic.

Again, grant the Causality doctrine, and (as well as directly from the experience doctrine) there follows in logic the doctrine of the inscrutability of ultimate efficiency and of supreme design—whether as regards their nature or their reality. In other words, in granting the causality doctrine you have conceded premises from which is inevitably deduced the modern doctrine of the Unknowable—i. e. Ag-



# Apologetics.

AGNOSTICISM.  
(A SYLLABUS.)

3

nosticism. It is therefore evident that the discussion has been logically narrowed down to this, the truth or falsity of Hume's doctrine that all our knowledge is at last derived from experience, in Hume's sense of the word.

But the controversy was settled long ago. (Hume's theory is as dead as Hector).

Consequently Agnosticism, viewed as an entire system, has nothing logical to stand on.

Herbert Spencer, indeed, has sought to buttress up the general doctrine of the Unknowable by calling in the aid of Sir William Hamilton and Dean Mansel—in Mansel's "Limits of Religious Thought."

This diversion I have considered in two articles in the S. P. Review,\* and have there undertaken to show two things.

The first of these was, that Hamilton's language is ambiguous, and certainly gives no countenance to Agnosticism except on the assumption that Hamilton's meaning is the same with Mansel's, and that even then it must be admitted that Mansel like Hamilton was an ardent friend to Christian Theology. The second thing was, that Mansel's ground in the "Limits" is not only precarious and dangerous, but untenable and erroneous.

Let us now take a general view of Agnosticism, and array the principal arguments against it. The first argument I shall bring forward is, that it is *only* PARTIALLY true that the system follows from its own premises.

Remember that it does not follow from the Hamiltonian

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\*See articles entitled respectively, "The Metaphysical Postulate of Mr. Herbert Spencer's First Principles." S. P. Review, July 1876; 1st. Art.: And "The Modern Doctrine of the Unknowable." S. P. Review, Oct. 1876: 2d. Art.

# Apologetics.

AGNOSTICISM.  
(A SYLLABUS.)

4

doctrine of the incognitable. From Hume's premises *a* system (and a most thorough going one) of Agnosticism follows but not *the* system of Agnosticism opposed in this lecture.

Remember, Agnosticism, (where not tacit Atheism) may assume two forms.—It may AFFIRM God's EXISTENCE and DENY the KNOWABLENESS of God's NATURE. This is the first form.

This is nearly Spencer's attitude and still more distinctly Prof. John Fiske's of Harvard. This first form of Agnosticism is logically untenable on Agnostic principles.

The affirmation of the fact of the Divine existence is only reasonable on theistic grounds.

If we cannot predicate *anything* of an ultimate *principium* of all things, we cannot ascribe even reality to that principium. This rules out Spencer's scheme of Materialistic Pantheism.

Spencer's ridicule of the 'Carpenter theory' as he terms it, of the universe is equally illogical and for the same reason.

"nescience" should be deaf, blind, and dumb, on all such points.

The other and more subtil form of Agnosticism DENIES that we CAN KNOW EITHER the EXISTENCE OR the NATURE of God.

This was the ostensible attitude of Comte (i. e. in *La Philosophie Positive*), and seems to have been usually the attitude of J. S. Mill; an avowed disciple of the *Pyrrhonist* Hume.

Mill defines *matter* as a "permanent possibility of sensation." (Illustration—Island of Madagascar.) He conjectured too, that *mind* was only a "permanent possibility of feel-



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(A SYLLABUS.)

5

ings." Mill (though himself a sort of half-way Nihilist) admits that on strictly agnostic principles, or even on his own peculiar idealistic principles there *may* be just as much reality about the existence and operations of a God as there is about our own. If so, at least so far as all practical purposes are concerned, we might reconstruct *in posse* the entire Christian scheme of the new testament.

The single point reserved for settlement (with regard to which Mill favours us with his own opinions or conjectures), is a metaphysical question relating to the intimate constitution of all being. But on agnostic principles all such subtle Metaphysical questions are incapable of solution.

Even on purely agnostic principles, then the theistic, rather than the Pantheistic or Atheistic, solution may be after all the one which corresponds with the reality of the case, although on agnostic principles we are precluded from ever finding out the fact. Agnosticism, therefore, ought to be more humble and tolerant.

My second argument, however, against Agnosticism is, that its PREMISES are UNTENABLE and FALSE, and its GENERAL CONCLUSION UNWARRANTABLE and MONSTROUS.

The treacherous foundation afforded by Mansel's work has already been referred to. The only other, and (as we have seen) the main logical ground-work for the entire fabric of Agnosticism is the empirical philosophy of Hume.

Hume's philosophy has been exploded ever since the days of Reid in Scotland, and received its death-blow at the hands of Kant in Germany.

If Hume be right, we are landed in the insane contradiction that there is no truth at all; or none that can be known as such. For if we follow Hume we must hold that



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there is no such thing as intuitive judgments that are valid.

A man who held this might as well doubt his own existence. Now every process of reasoning, if not worthless, ends in a final and decisive act of judgment. But this last act is *intuitive* and, according to Hume, consequently invalid.

Thus Hume's *didactic* position, that all our knowledge is derived ultimately from sensible experience, leads remorselessly to Hume's *skeptical* position, of the invalidity of all human knowledge.

It might, therefore, have been urged under the preceding head that the Agnostic argument proves nothing, or else it proves too much: conducting as it does to stark Pyrrhonism.

Such premises must be false. It is absurd for the empirical skeptic to ARGUE *any* proposition; even the invalidity of all knowledge, and therefore of all argument. It is however scarcely less absurd to argue *with* the empirical skeptic. All such argument would seem to beg the very point in dispute.

The fact is the skeptic has logically given up his ground the moment he enters the debate. Such a debate ought to be ruled out of order. *Some* things do not admit of sane discussion. The only satisfactory method with the empirical skeptic is to satisfy him of the validity of the law of causation, and of the intuitive certainty that every change is an effect, and that every effect must have a first efficient and supreme final cause.

The vindication of Theism as against Agnosticism then, so far as the truth of the premises is involved, is the same thing with the vindication of the intuitive philosophy as against Empiricism, and of the true doctrine of Causality as against the doctrine of mere priority or antecedence.



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But the Empirical logic is not more faulty than the Empirical metaphysics. In one of its extreme forms (e. g. Comte) Empiricism scouts Metaphysics.

But Empiricism in all its forms rests on a purely metaphysical basis (i. e. chiefly that of Hume).

So far as this is *good* metaphysics it has no legitimate tendency to sustain, but on the contrary to overthrow, the empirical skeptic. So far as the metaphysics is *bad* it is wholly nugatory.

Metaphysics, Science, the very process of generalisation, rest on intuitive beliefs.

Metaphysics is the only science which does not borrow its own postulates (Bowen), and (I may add) borrow them from metaphysics.

The only pretence of argument *for* empiricism (except the psychological one already considered) is that "Science" has never ascertained, and can never hope to ascertain, the reality of spiritual phenomena.

The fallacy here is in a sophistical use of the term *science*. If the term be taken narrowly, the fallacy is *ignoratio elenchi*; if broadly, *petitio principii*.

But the REASONING and the PREMISES of the Agnostic are not more *indefensible*, than his CONCLUSION is *unwarrantable and monstrous*. (The stone man of the Rosicrucians).

There is a genuine and Biblical Agnosticism ("Touching the Almighty" &c.). But the Pseudo-Agnosticism that built the Athenian altar "to the Unknown God," and now strives to subvert Christianity. is a hypocritical sham; a deadly foe under the disguise of a friend; an enemy of man as well as of God.





# Apologetics.

EVOLUTION.

(AN EPITOME.)

1

[Chiefly taken (March 14, 1885) from Mr. Little's notes of last year; but with the points rearranged and somewhat enlarged and improved.]

"Evolution"—(etymologically) { "Development"—(etymologically) UNROLLING.  
(More Atheistic and Agnostic) { logically) UNVEILING.  
(More Deistic and Theistic.)

The term "EVOLUTION" has at length pretty much superseded the term "Development"—["Descent with modification"] both in good and bad senses.

Evolution defined,— { See Dr. Woodrow's address in  
S. P. C., July 1885, p. 348.

Evolution may be considered in reference,

1. To spontaneous Generation. [Pouchet—Pasteur—Bastain—Frankland—Tyndall, &c.]
2. To the Nebular Hypothesis.
3. To the Derivation Hypothesis. (Take up the first two points briefly.)

THE DERIVATION HYPOTHESIS attempts to account for the origin of the successive Species of organisms without admitting the fact of special creations.

De Mallet, Lamarck, Darwin, &c. [Heredity—Variation—Environment.] (Illustrate from dahlias and pigeons.)





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EVOLUTION.

(AN EPITOME.)

2

PLAUSIBILITIES.

1. The vast Number of Species. (e. g. Australian humming-birds).
2. The Correlation of Species. (e. g. The "Homologies of the Vertebrate skeleton."—(See Dr Woodrow, S. P. R. July, 1885, p. 362.) [N. b. Agassiz's Essay on Natural History, and his idea of the ARCHITECTURE of the Creation as the handiwork of God.]
3. The apparent *Reversion* of Species. (e. g. "Bloody Buttocks."—The ass and the zebra.)
4. Rudimentary Structures. (See Dr. Woodrow, S. P. R. July, 1885, p. 363.)
5. Embryology. (See Dr. Woodrow, S. P. R. July, 1885, pp. 363 and 364.)

## ARGUMENTS AGAINST

EVOLUTION,

(in this sense).

1. It is only a hypothesis. (See clipping on "SACRADOTALISM IN SCIENCE.")
2. *it does not* (i. e. Darwin's scheme) even *pretend to account for the Laws* of Heredity and Variation, which it assumes and (at least in the Darwinian scheme) which are made to





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(AN EPITOME.)

3

PLAUSIBILITIES.

account for nearly everything else. Argyll, and others.

3. Its fundamental basis is Analogical Inference, and its whole plausibility arises from a fallacious extension of the analogical process. (e. g. Newton and La Grange.—See “Pater Mundi” for other examples.)

4. It presupposes *a length of time* which may not be allowed by the final determination of science. (Lyell.—Sir William Thompson.)

5. The Hypothesis is opposed TO THE ASCERTAINED FACTS as to Hybridity (the infertility of hybrids) and the invariable permanance of historic species.

6. It conflicts with the central facts of Geology. (See especially Dr. Burr’s “Pater Mundi.” Quote Sedgewick” from Pater Mundi, Sec. Series, p. 126.) [Gradations.—Catastrophes,—or Paroxysms.—The Doctrine of Probability.] (“They ask for time. How much time do they want? They have all of Geological time!”—Darwin no Geologist.—Dr. Alexander Young, LL. D. of Allegheny, at the Belfast Council in 1884.)

7. In its boldest forms it absurdly refers everything to  
BLIND NATURE

# Apologies

1. The fundamental basis is a biological influence, and the whole possibility arises from a biological extension of the biological process. (See Huxley and La Plante - See "The Mind" for other examples.)

2. It presupposes a type of case which may not be altered by the determination of essence. (Huxley - See "The Mind" for other examples.)

3. The Hypothesis is opposed to the traditional view as to the inheritance of habits and the inheritance of habits of habits.

4. It conflicts with the central facts of biology. (See "The Mind" for other examples.)

5. It conflicts with the central facts of biology. (See "The Mind" for other examples.)

6. It conflicts with the central facts of biology. (See "The Mind" for other examples.)

7. It conflicts with the central facts of biology. (See "The Mind" for other examples.)

8. It conflicts with the central facts of biology. (See "The Mind" for other examples.)

9. It conflicts with the central facts of biology. (See "The Mind" for other examples.)

10. It conflicts with the central facts of biology. (See "The Mind" for other examples.)

11. It conflicts with the central facts of biology. (See "The Mind" for other examples.)



# Apologetics.

EVOLUTION.

(AN EPITOME.)

4

PLAUSIBILITIES.

8. Even were Evolution (in some high form) to be demonstrated; this would only be a new demonstration of the being and operations of a God.

9. In its extreem forms, Evolution *confounds the distinction between mind and matter.*

10. In its grossest forms Evolution stands in flagrant contradiction to the Scriptures, and in any form (except possibly to a limited extent) can hardly be made to square with it. (The Nebular Hypothesis, once more.—Plants and lower animals. “After his kind.”)

11. *The Popular Ascendency* of Darwinism (as evinced in the talk and literature of the day) is DUE TO THE SUPPOSED FACT THAT IT IS ACCEPTED BY THE MEN OF SCIENCE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.—But this is far from being true to the extent imagined, and constantly asserted.—So far as the organisms below MAN are concerned the alleged fact is nearer the truth than was once the case.—Yet even here it is only partially true.—And in relation to MAN ENTIRE, and especially MAN’S SOUL, it is conspicuously without adequate foundation.—(Christlieb’s testimony.—Dr. Southall’s testimony.)  
[See Dr. Southall’s letter to me of March 5, 1880.]





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# ECCLESIOLOGY.

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## INTRODUCTORY.

The scientific theologians of Germany have arranged the cycle of sacred knowledge under five leading categories, viz: 1. "*Theology*," the science of God.—2. "*Anthropology*," the science of man in relation to God.—3. "*Soteriology*," the science of salvation.—4. "*Ecclesiology*," the science of the church.—5. "*Eschatology*," or the science of "the last things." The term *Theology*, in this classification, you will notice, is used in a narrow sense for a particular branch of Theology, commonly so-called; and is concerned with discussions touching the Being and Personality of God, and embraces, as a sub-division, "*Christology*," or the doctrine of the Person of Christ, the God-man. It includes also the doctrine concerning the creation and government of the world, and the doctrine of Angels and Dæmons. (See Hagenbach's History of Doctrines—Robinson on the Church.) "*Anthropology*," or the science of man, treats of such questions as the origin of the soul, liberty and immortality, the fall, sin, &c. *Soteriology*, or the science of salvation, embraces, chiefly, the doctrines of Redemption and Atonement, Justification, and, in short, the Priestly work of Christ in all its relations to the curse of the law, and to human guilt and condemnation, and the work of the Holy Ghost. (Hagenbach ut sup. cit.)

Now, such a classification implies, in the History of Doctrine, these three things: 1. That *Ecclesiology* is a branch of Theology in the wide sense. 2. That it comes after the first three, in a natural or logical method. 3. That it comes after the first three in an historical order.

(1.) Ecclesiology belongs to Theology. The doctrine of the



church belongs to the things which have been revealed of God, and are, therefore, objects of faith. Accordingly, we find this doctrine in the very earliest symbol of the Christian church, the "Apostle's creed," standing in the same relation to the "credo," as the other articles, and in the same order, with respect to the doctrines concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which we find in the classification we are considering. So also, in nearly all the larger creeds and confessions of a later date. The 25th chapter of our own "Confession of Faith," is entitled, "Of the Church."

(2.) The doctrine of the church, in a rational or logical order, falls to be considered after Theology, Anthropology, and Soteriology, for the very obvious reason that the church is the great and last result contemplated by the revelation concerning God, man, and salvation. It is the highest end, next to the glory of God, of all the counsels and all the works of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son, sanctified by the Spirit, and finally presented a "glorious church," without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, the Bride, the Lamb's wife, shall be hailed by principalities and powers, in heavenly places, as the highest and noblest display of the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 3: 9, 10); as far transcending in glory the old creation over which the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, as the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit, transcends in glory the first Adam, who was but a living soul.

Meanwhile, during this dispensation of testimony and of trial, it is the office of the church, as the pillar and buttress of the truth, to bear witness of the great truths which are comprehended under the terms Theology, Anthropology, and Soteriology. She is not only the object of the working of that Triune God of whom Theology treats, and the subject of that sin and salvation of which Anthropology and Soteriology treat, but to her have been committed the lively oracles which alone determine the faith of mankind upon all these classes of truths, and through her are these truths to be published to the race. The contents of the message are to be pondered first, then the nature of the messenger. This is the rational order.



(3.) It is also the order of History. It is worthy of note that "the history of the church since the apostles, seems to have been a development in succession of these four in their order. "Theology" had its full development during the controversies concerning the nature of the Godhead which closed with the labors of Athanasius; "Anthropology," during the Pelagian controversy, closing with the labors of Augustine. Next, after a thousand years of repose and silence in the church, was developed Soteriology, through the labors of Luther and Calvin, proclaiming salvation as by grace through faith; leaving the fourth (Ecclesiology) yet to be developed." (Robinson on the Church, pp. 27, 28.) This is certainly striking, though absolute accuracy would, perhaps, require the statement to be modified and limited.

In harmony with this idea that the development of Ecclesiology may be reserved for the last, perhaps our own times, is the fact that many of the most obtrusive tendencies of speculation, socialistic, political, philosophical, in the nineteenth century appear in discussions about the principle of *fellowship*, the principle upon which the church is constituted. I may instance "Communism," "St. Simonianism," &c., in social philosophy; the principles of "sodality" and "solidarity," in political philosophy; and the principle of "catholicity" used as the criterion of certitude in philosophy properly so-called. (See Trench's Hulsean, sect. 8, p. 125—Morell's Philosophy of Religion—Morell on Phil. Tendencies of the Age, l. 4th.) Indeed it is not unlikely that two of the three frog-like, unclean spirits which John tells us (Rev. 16: 13,) proceed out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, "Infidelity" and "Formalism," may form a coalition upon the principle of catholicity (*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*) for one final, desperate assault upon the church of God, (see Presb. Critic, vol. 1, p. 291, 2,) envied, like Abel of old, for her possession of the absolute truth, certitude and assurance.

However this may be, there can be no doubt that the question of the church is, in our day and in our own branch of the church, one of the most conspicuous; and there is little doubt that assertions are made in regard to the nature and functions of the church, in some of these discussions, which, if accepted and believed, must be fatal to the soul.



These facts constitute an ample vindication of the importance of the studies upon which we are about to enter as well as of the appropriateness of the place assigned to them in the Seminary Curriculum.

## II.

### *Terms and Denominations.*

"CHURCH." This word, and German *kirche*, Saxon *circe*, and Scotch *kirk*, are derived, propably, from the Greek *κυριακος*, or *το κυριακον*, that which belongeth to the Lord. "As a house of God is called a Basilica, i. e., regia a Rege, so also it is named *Kyrica* i. e., Dominica a Domino (*κυριος*) "says an old author (quoted in Gieseler's C. H., § 1). It appears from Ulfilas that in general, the Greek names of Christian things were adopted among the Goths. The Greek origin of the word is confirmed also by its being found not only in all the German dialects, (Swedish *kyrka*, Danish *kirke*, etc.,) but also in those of the Slavonian nations who were converted by the Greeks, (Polish *cerkiew*, Russian *herkow*, Bohemian *cyrkew*.) (See note to the Sec. in Gieseler ut supra.)

"SYNAGOGUE." This word is used in the LXX often as well as in the New Testament. It is put for any kind of an assembly, whether sacred or civil (Ex. 12: 3, 19—Numb. 16: 2), nay, even in a bad sense for a profane and impious assembly (Ps. 26: 5); sometimes for the place of meeting (Luke 7: 5), in which the Jews were accustomed to assemble to hear the law, offer prayers and perform other offices of devotion beside those which were to be performed in the temple. Thence the so frequent mention of synagogues in the N. T., the origin of which, according to some, was in the time of Moses (Acts 15: 21); according to others in the time of the captivity, when they were deprived of the temple services. Hence, the "synagogue" has come to denote the Jewish church in like manner as "the church" has been applied to the Christian church.

"ECCLESIA" is a Gentile, as synagogue is a Jewish denomination (Turretin, vol. III., pp. 7, 8). Hence, in the Epistle of James (2: 2), which is addressed to Jewish christians, the assembly of



worshippers is called the synagogue; but the churches under the gospel being composed for the most part of Gentile converts, the term *ecclesia* is most commonly used, (Turretin *ut supra*—Witsius, *Exercit. Sac. in Symbolum* 24, p. 451, Amstelod 1697).

The Greek *ἐκκλησία* answers precisely to the *kahal* and *gheda* of the Old Testament, all these terms signifying *an assembly*, especially one convened by invitation or appointment. (Mason's *Essays on the Church*, No. 1, works, vol. 4, p. 3). "That this is their generic sense," says Dr. Mason, "no scholar will deny; nor that their particular applications are ultimately resolvable into it. Hence it is evident, from the terms themselves, nothing can be concluded as to the nature or extent of the assembly which they denote. Whenever either of the two former occurs in the O. T., or the other in the new, you are sure of an *assembly*, but of nothing more. What that assembly is, and whom it comprehends, you must learn from the *connexion* of the term, and the subject of the writer. A few instances will exemplify the remark:

In the O. T., *kahal* is applied—To the *whole mass* of the people (Ex. 12: 6)—To a *portion* of the people, who came upon Hezekiah's invitation to keep the passover, (2 Chron. 30: 24)—To the *army* of Pharaoh (Ezek. 17: 17)—To an *indefinite multitude* (Gen. 28: 3)—To the society of Simeon and Levi (Gen. 49: 6) So also *gheda* is applied—To the *whole* nation of Israel (Ex. 16: 22)—To the *particular* company of Korah, Dathan and Abiram (Numb. 16: 16)—To the assembly of the *just* as opposed to the *wicked* (Ps. 1: 5)—To the *judicatory*, before whom crimes were tried (Numb. 35: 12, 24, comp. with Deut. 19: 12, 17, 18). In like manner *ἐκκλησία*, in N. T., is applied—To the *whole body* of the redeemed (Eph. 5: 24, 27)—To the *whole body* of professing Christians, whether more or less extensive, as in the apostolic salutations and inscriptions of the epistles—To a *small association* of Christians meeting together in a private house (Col. 4: 15, Phil. 1: 2)—To a civil assembly *lawfully* convened (Acts 19: 32)—To a body of persons *irregularly* convened (Acts 19: 32). "*Πανήγυρις*," (Hebrews, 12: 23) which has a signification somewhat different from the *ecclesia*. Where the people among the Greeks were convoked for the purpose of deliberating and determining concerning matters pertaining to the republic, the



assembly, as we have already noted, was called *ecclesia*. But when, as in the Panathenæa, they were invited to some festive spectacle, then the assembly was called *Πανζγορις*, and an oration delivered on such an occasion was called *Πανζγορικος λογος*. An assembly of the faithful, therefore, convened to act upon things pertaining to the kingdom of God, *i. e.*, spiritual and heavenly things, may be called *ecclesia*; but inasmuch as they are invited and admitted to the greatest spectacle in the universe, the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ, the assembly may be called *πανζγορις*. (See Witsius ut Sup.)

### III.

#### DEFINITIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS.

The church may be defined, "a society of faithful or believing men, called by God, through the word, out of the whole human race, to the communion of the covenant of grace in Christ." (Witsius ut Sup., 24, sec. 6). The different members of this definition must be explained in their order:

1st. It is a *society*. This implies not only that the individuals composing it are *many* (1 Cor. 10: 17); but as we are taught in this text, and in 1 Cor. 12: 14, many joined together organically, so as to make *one body*. Society implies a community of nature and of ends. Instance in the family and in the state, which, like the church, have been instituted by God. The same is true, to a certain extent, even of voluntary associations. The members are "fellows," at least with respect to the ends for which the association is instituted. This idea of community of nature, feeling, interests, &c., is expressed emphatically in the common illustration drawn from the human body. (See 1 Cor. 12—Eph. 4: 4, &c.) If one member suffers or rejoices, the other members suffer or rejoice with it. The functions discharged by one member are discharged for the good of all. Each is interested in all and all in each. The notion of a body, however, implies also (see Eph. 4: 16) organization, a constitution of the parts or members in certain relations to each other and to the whole, and especially a common relation or union to a head, a directing power which shall give unity to the operations of all the parts. Of the body,



the church, Christ is the head. This view of the nature of society shows the absurdity of all theories of the church, which make connexion with the church the means of regeneration. This is equivalent to saying that a man must become a member of society in order to be a human being; that the atmosphere creates the lungs, or that the light makes the eye. The truth is, that a man becomes a christian and a member of the church at the same time by the same act of God; but in the order of nature he must become a christian first.

The same idea of society is conveyed in other images of Scripture beside that of a body. For instance, the images of a tree (Rom. 11), a fold under one shepherd (John 10), a city or state (Phil. 3: 20, with Eph. 2: 19). See Potter on Church Government, chap. 1.—Mason's Plea for Communion, at the beginning.

2d. It is a society of *men*. The angels are our fellow-servants (Rev. 19: 10), having the same Master; they are children of the same great family (Job 1: 6—38: 7), and partakers of the same blessedness, which consists in communion with God, whence we are said "to come to an innumerable company of angels" (Heb. 12: 22). Yet they are what they are in a different mode and by a different title, not redeemed by Christ, not called by the gospel, not born again of the Spirit, not partakers of the covenant of grace, which are the highest privileges of the church, and its characteristic marks. (See Heb. 2: 16). Witsius ut Supra, 24 sec. 6.

3rd. It is a society of believing men. As I have already stated in the course on history, the word and the life of the church constitute its *form* or formal nature; and faith is the first and most prominent exponent of the life. Now, faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. The word comes promiscuously to all, but is not believed by all. Faith makes the difference among them. The faithful have a new life. Faith is mixed with the word, (Heb. 4: 2), and a christian is the result, and the church is composed of christians. The object of faith is substantially the same in all ages, and, therefore, faith is substantially the same; and, therefore, the church is substantially the same in all ages. See Acts 2: 41—Heb. 3: 6—4: 1, &c.)

4th. It is a society of *holy* men. This is virtually included in



the last; but deserves an articulate statement. (1. Peter 2: 9—1 Cor. 1: 2, and other inscriptions to the Epistles). (See Witsius *ut sup*).

5th. It is a society *called of God* (Gal. 1: 6 *et al*). God is said to be the caller, (Rom. 9: 11). Hence the church is the church of the living God, (1 Tim. 3: 15). Hence the church is, in one sense, a voluntary society, and in another sense it is not. The call of God is a command as well as an invitation to every man who hears it, to come out and be separate from the world which lies in wickedness. If he is destitute of faith, he is bound to seek it, and if he seek it not, he is lost. On the other hand, no man is coerced to become a member of the church. God makes his people willing in the day of his power. The *κλητοι* are called sweetly as well as powerfully by the Spirit, *enabled* and *persuaded* to receive Christ as he is offered to them in the gospel. As before man, the church is a voluntary society; for in the whole matter, God has left the conscience free from the commandments of men.

God is a sovereign in calling, (Rom. 9: 11). Many are called but few chosen (Math. 20). This is implied in the very term "Ecclesia."

6th. It is a society called of God *by the word*. Hence where there is no word, there is no church. (See under third head "believing men;" see 1. Cor. 1: 21). This word is law and gospel, (Gal. 3: 2 *et al*).

7th. The church is called *out of the whole human race*; first, the Israelites (Ps. 147: 19, 20); then the Gentiles (Is. 55: 5—Acts 15: 14).

8th. The *end* of this calling is *communion with Christ in the covenant of grace* (Prov. 9: 4, 5—Is. 55: 2-3—1 Cor. 1: 9 *et al*).

9th. The church is *one*. This follows from all that has been said.

#### IV.

#### DISTINCTION OF CHURCH EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL.

It is to be noted, however, that there is a two-fold form, or if you prefer the expression, state and condition of the church; the



one *internal* and *mystical*, in which God alone judges with certainty concerning its members; the other *external* and *visible*, in which man is also the judge. To refer to the definition of the church already given, we may note:

1st. That there is a *two-fold calling*; the one external by the word (Math. 20: 16); the other, *internal*, by the Spirit (Rom. 8: 30).

2d. A *two-fold faith* answering to this calling: the one *common*, found even in reprobates, by which, assenting to the truth of the Gospel, they experience some transient joy (Acts 8: 13—Math. 13: 20, &c.—Mark 6: 20—Heb. 6: 4, &c.); the other *saving*, “the faith of God’s elect” (Tit. 1: 1), “faith unfeigned” 1 Tim. 1: 5), “faith working by love” (Gal. 5: 5).

3d. A *two-fold holiness*; the one *relative, external, federal*, consisting in the segregation from the communion of the impure and the profane (Ezra 9: 2). In this sense the Israelites are called “the holy seed.” See also Rom. 11: 16. Such a holiness is recognized also in the N. T. (See 1 Cor. 6: 1, 2—1 Cor. 7: 14). The other is *absolute, internal, real*, the property of those who are born again, a conformity to God and an image of His holiness (Ps. 93: 5—1 Pet. 1: 15, 16).

4th. A *two fold communion in the covenant*; the one *external* in the signs of the covenant, belonging to the infant offspring of parents in the covenant (Gen. 17: 7—Acts 2: 34), and to adults who make a credible profession of their faith, though they possess it not (John 15: 2, 6); the other, an *internal, spiritual*, saving communion in the things signified, such as remission of sins, the law written upon the heart, &c. (Heb. 8: 10-12). Compare the distinctions in Romans 2: 28, 29, which may be analogically transferred to Christianity. (Witsius, Ex. 24, § 11.)

Hence the two-fold form or condition of the church, the one *visible*, depending upon the profession of faith and the observance of worship; the other *spiritual* and *invisible*, which, owing its origin to the eternal election of God, reaches its consummation by a living faith and holiness. (See 1 John 2: 19.)

With this distinction correspond very nearly the definitions commonly given, and given in our Confession of Faith, c. 25.)

The *church invisible* is thus defined; See sec. 1,—“The Church,”



&c.—Note, that the invisible church catholic, according to this definition, differs from the *internal, mystical, spiritual* church of which we have been speaking only in this, that it includes *all* the elect of all ages, past and future, while the latter includes only those who at any given period are actually justified and sanctified. (See the Scrip. references in the Confession.) The invisible church catholic may be considered either *universally* and καθόλου, with respect to the whole multitude of the faithful which constitute it, of whatever time or place they may be; or *particularly* and καταμερος, now, concerning that which reigns gloriously with Christ in heaven, and now, concerning that which labors and sojourns in the world and is distributed in particular churches. (Turretin, s. 7, q. 2, L. 18, vol. 3, p. 9).

Note, that the church invisible is not practically recognized at all by the church of Rome—they make a distinction between the church militant and the church triumphant. The church militant, which is also visible, is the Roman Catholic, out of which there is no possibility of salvation. To this church they ascribe all the attributes of the true or invisible church, unity, catholicity, holiness, indefectibility, &c., and thus make merchandize of souls. The great champion of Rome, in the 16th century, Bellarmine, thus defines the church (See Turretin ut sup.): “Coe-tum hominum, ejusdem Christianae fidei professione, et eorundem sacramentorum communione colligatum, sub regimine legitimorum pastorum, ac praecipue unius Christi in terris vicarii, Pontificis Romani.”—A definition not drawn from the Scriptures, but made to serve a turn.

THE CHURCH VISIBLE is thus defined in our Confession of Faith, c. 25, s. 2: “The visible church, &c..” Turretin gives a definition, in some respects more complete, or at least, more explicit. It is as follows (18, 2, 10, p. 10): “Societas hominum praeconio evangelii vocatorum ad unius fidei professionem, eorundem sacrorum communioem, et ejusdem ordinis observationem.”

Before I proceed to consider the contents of these definitions of the church visible, I will say a word on its relation to the church invisible, in addition to what has already been said when considering the general doctrine of the church. This relation



is suggested by the etymon of the term "ecclesia," and is contained in the notion of a vocation, or rather an evocation (*εχκαλεῖν*), a calling out of, scilicet, the mass of the human race. Both are to be referred, the church visible and the church invisible, to the sovereign purpose of God; of which the whole process of salvation is an evolution. That purpose was a purpose to save, "not merely myriads of men as *individual men*, but myriads of sinners as composing a mediatorial body of which the mediator shall be the head, a mediatorial kingdom whose government shall be on his shoulders forever; a church, the Lamb's bride, of which he shall be the husband, a bride whose beautiful portrait was graven upon the palms of His hands and whose walls were continually before Him, when in the counsels of eternity He undertook her redemption. "Christ did not undertake from eternity the office of a prophet merely, nor the office of a priest merely, but as the result of all and the reward of all, to found a *community*, to organize a *government*, and administer therein as a perpetual *king*." (Robinson on the Church, pp. 38, 39.) Now, in the manifestation and fulfilment of this purpose in *time*, "the ideal *εκλεκτοι* of the covenant of redemption became the actual *κλητοι*. Inasmuch as they are called by an external clesis of the word, they are gathered in successive generations to constitute the ecclesia on earth. In as far as they are called also by the internal clesis of the Spirit, they are gathered to constitute the invisible ecclesia, the full and complete actual of the eternal ideal. For whilst, indeed, the effectual call of the Spirit can alone fulfil the promise of the eternal covenant to Messiah, yet, as that call is externally through the word and the visible ordinances, the very process of calling and preparing the elect of God creates the visible church in the very image of the invisible, and it is in this visible body that the Mediator carries on His administration, works by His Spirit, &c., and it is by this body that he carries on His purposes of mercy toward a world lying in wickedness." (Robinson, pp. 41, 42.) See also Robinson's "Discourses on Redemption," pp. 455 et seq.



## V.

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH VISIBLE.

See the definitions given in No. IV. Many of the features of the visible church are common to it with the church invisible, and have been described in preceding numbers, III., IV. It is a society, an organized society, a society of men, a society called of God, a society called by the word, called out of the whole human race, a society subject to the authority of Christ as its head.

The characteristic features of the church visible, those which make it visible, are according to the definitions:

1st. A credible profession of faith and holiness, and not real faith and holiness, is the term of membership and communion on the part of adults.

2d. The right of infants, children of such credible professors, to the initiating sign and seal, recognizing them members of the church, in somewhat the same manner, as minors, in civil society, are members of the State.

3d. Certain sacred rites and forms of worship, through which this credible profession is made, and the covenant state of infants recognized.

4th. A certain "order" or government, or system of discipline, in the hands of church officers called of God and chosen by the people.

5th. The possession and use of oracles, ministry, ordinances, for the ingathering of the elect and their sanctification; in other words, for the completion of the mystical body of Christ, the church invisible. (See Conf. of Faith, c. 25, s. 3.) Out of the church visible there is "no ordinary possibility of salvation." (*Ibid*, sec. 2.)

6th. Catholicity. I mention this as a distinctive feature of the church visible, although it belongs also to the church invisible, for the reason that the term catholic is used in several different senses: (1.) In the widest sense, embracing all differences of places, times, persons, and states, and denoting the whole family of God, in heaven and earth, militant and triumphant, past, present, and future. In this sense it is properly



applied only to the church invisible. (2.) In a narrower sense, for the church under the gospel, in opposition to the church under the law; and this in regard to places, persons, and times. (a.) *Places.* Christian church no longer restricted to one place of worship. (John 4: 21, 23—I Tim. 2: 8). (b.) *Persons.* Christian church has no respect to differences of family, rank, nation, &c. Neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, &c. (Rom. 10: 12; Acts 10: 35; Col. 3: 11; Apoc. 5: 9.) (c.) *Times.* The Christian church must continue till the consummation of the ages. In the sense thus explained, the term catholic is also applied to the whole church on earth in opposition to "particular churches," existing in certain places or at certain times. (3.) In an abusive sense, as equivalent to "*orthodox*." Commonly so used by the Fathers after Augustin, to denote a particular church which maintained its communion with the church universal, and had not been separated from it by heresy or schism. Thus, the "Catholic church in Smyrna," "in Alexandria," &c. This use of the term seems to have become common during, and in consequence of the discussions about the Montanists, Donatists, Novatians, and other Cathari of early times. Unfortunately, however, catholicity was made to depend upon official succession, instead of the succession of the truth; and this stupendous error led, in the course of time, to Catholicism. (See on the word Catholic, Witsius, *ut sup.* 24, 20; Turretin, L. 18, q. 6, vol. 3, p. 27, 28; Pearson on the Creed; Suicer's Thesau. sub. verb.)

It is in the second of the senses above given that our Confession uses the word of the church visible. "All those throughout the world."

7th. *Unity.* Same remark about this term as the last. The true idea of unity in the church visible will be explained when we come to consider the Presbyterian system in opposition to popery and independency.

So much for the general features of the church visible. Many of these will be described more fully hereafter, as they are connected with the proofs of the existence of such a church, and with the mode in which it is maintained and perpetuated.



## VI.

## PROOFS OF THE EXISTENCE OF A CHURCH VISIBLE.

1st. To say nothing of the dim traces of such a body in the garden of Eden, to be discerned in the skins with which our first parents were clothed, (implying that the animals slain had been slain in sacrifice, and that the form of public worship, by which a *profession of faith* in the promise of God was made, had been already instituted); nor to insist upon the clearer traces of it in the history of Cain and Abel; (*public worship and profession of faith*, Gen. 4: 4, with Heb. 11: 4:—*stated times* of worship, "v. 3, at the end of days;"—*a stated place*, marked by some insignia of God's presence, a foreshadowing of the tabernacle and the temple, v. 16, and compare 14, "from thy face shall I be hid;" *excommunication*, v. 14, comp., with v. 12, 16—*apostacy from a religious profession*, v. 16); nor upon the additional trace of such a body in the times of Enos, when "men began to call themselves by the name of the Lord," Gen. 4: 26—or, as it is explained afterwards in the history, 6: 2—"sons of God," in opposition, probably, to the apostate posterity of Cain, who were called "sons of men," or, as we say, "men of the world,"—see Gen. 4: 17, 19, 22, and comp. Ps. 17: 14; 4: 6; 49: 11, 18—nor again in the times of Noah, (when, in consequence of the intermarriage of the "sons of God" with the "daughters of men," or the members of the true church with apostates—see Gen. 6: 1, &c., and comp. Numb. 25: 1, &c.; Ezra 9: 2; Neh. 13: 26, 27; universal apostacy was the result); nor upon the manifest tracks of a patriarchal church, before the covenant of circumcision with Abraham, down through the whole history of his descendants in the line of Jacob, to the advent of the Messiah. This church, or "kahal" Jehovah, embraced all who had the token of the covenant in their flesh, whether regenerated or not, whether in or out of Judea. (Acts 2: 5.) Now, if such a church existed before the advent of Messiah—a church founded upon faith (or the credible profession thereof,) in the promise of salvation, with solemn ordinances of worship, by which that profession was made and constantly renewed; a church embracing the infant offspring of such



professors, and possessing a sign and seal by which this status of infants was recognized; a church with a government and discipline in the hands of men appointed of God, and in general with a ministry, oracles and ordinances, for the edification of the true worshippers; a church, too, as will appear hereafter, catholic in its constitution and design, though not so in fact to any great extent under the law. If such a church existed then, what has become of it? Its ceremonial form has been abolished, but it has not ceased to be the church, on that account, any more than the creature in its chrysalis condition ceases to be when it passes into the higher and freer sphere of the gorgeous butterfly. Nor does it cease to be because the people who pre-eminently enjoyed its privileges at first have been deprived of them; any more than the olive tree has ceased to be because the natural branches have been broken off and wild ones have been grafted in. He who denies the existence of a visible church since the advent of Christ, is bound to show that the church before Christ has been abolished, both in law and fact. (See Mason, vol. iv., pp. 5-8; Essay I.)

2d. "The Old Testament scriptures proceed on the supposition that the visible church-state, coextensive with the Redeemer's kingdom on earth, was *not* to cease at the introduction of the gospel dispensation." (Mason ut sup., p. 8, &c.)

(1.) There are numerous predictions concerning the church and numerous promises to her in her public capacity, which are still unfulfilled, and can never be fulfilled, if her visible unity be not asserted. See Is. 66: 12; 49: 23; 60: 3, 5. Now, upon the principle that "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Math. 22), the church must continue to exist in order to receive the fulfilment of these promises. (Mason, iv., p. 8, &c.)

2d. The nature of many of these promises implies that the narrow ceremonial trammels by which it was confined should be done away. The promises, therefore, imply at once perpetuity and change, and consequently, that the change is not inconsistent, much less incompatible, with perpetuity.

Note (a) that these promises contemplate the church as *one*; (b) that this unity is not ascribed to her as composed of the elect alone. The church is not represented as consisting of a multitude of independent associations, but as a great *whole*; and fur-



ther, as a *visible* body, her "light" visible, the "brightness of her rising" attracting the "kings," &c. (See also Is. 54: 1, 2, for a description implying the same thing.)

3d. "The language of the New Testament implies that an external visible church state was not abolished with the law of Moses." (Mason, iv: 11, &c.)

"The writers of the New Testament never go about to *prove* that there is a visible church catholic; far less do they speak of it as *originating* in the evangelical dispensation, but they assume its existence as a point which no Christian in their days ever thought of disputing." "The doctrine of the one visible church is interwoven with the texture of their language. (Acts 7: 36; 2: 47; 8: 3; 1 Cor. 12: 28, &c.; Rom. 16: 23; 1 Cor. 10: 32; 15: 9, &c., &c.). The church to which the Lord added daily such as should be saved, was not the body of the elect, for no addition can be made to them; nor a single congregation, unless God had no more people to be saved in Jerusalem than, together with mere professors, were sufficient for one pastoral charge. Nor is it to be imagined that Saul confined his persecutions to a single congregation, nor that he was able to pick out the elect. Nor will a sober man allege that God has set no officers but in one congregation, or that they have no functions toward any but His elect; or that all whom He hath set are themselves of the number; nor yet that "offence" can never be given to any but the elect." \* \* \* "The phrases referred to (in the above cited passages) are utterly inapplicable either to a single congregation, or to the body of the redeemed, must designate another and different society, which can be no other than what we have called the visible church catholic. Too extensive for partial assemblies, too notorious for any secret election of men, and yet a church—the church—it is *general, external*, and but *ONE*."

The phraseology of the New Testament on this subject, as on many others, is borrowed from that of the old. "Ecclesia" is the same as "kahal," and the seventy constantly use the former to render the latter. The Jews, then, would understand by "ecclesia Theou," the "kahal Jehovah." The Gentiles would (the Greeks, I mean,) understand "ecclesia" by itself, but would know nothing of "ecclesia Theou" without looking into the



Jewish scriptures, the Old Testament. The word "church" is like the word "Christ" in this respect. "Neither the nature of the church, nor the office of her head, is to be understood without an appeal to the same scriptures. Consequently that very rule which expounds the "Christ of God" as signifying one who was qualified by the Father's appointment and by the measureless communication of the divine Spirit to be a saviour for men, will oblige us to expound the "church of God" as signifying that great visible society which professes His name." (See Mason, pp. 14-17.)

4th. "The account which the New Testament gives of the church confirms the doctrine of the visible unity." (Mason ut supra, p. 17, &c.)

(1.) One of the commonest appellations is "the kingdom of Heaven:" *one*, because *the* not *a* kingdom. The parable of the "wheat and the tares" teaches that it is *VISIBLE* as well as *one*. (Here read pp. 18, &c., in proof that the parable designates the church and not civil society). So also the parables of the "net" and the "virgins." These parables of course cannot describe the body of the elect; and it would be absurd to limit them to a single congregation. Ergo, &c.

(2.) The image of a "body" in 1 Cor. xii. It plainly signifies a *whole*. Then *what* whole? Not the church at Corinth, far less a particular congregation, unless the commission of the apostles and the use of all spiritual gifts extend no further. Not the church of the elect, for there are no "schisms" in that body as such. Nor can it be affirmed but at the expense of all fact and consistency, that God hath set no officers except in the church of His redeemed. For upon that supposition no church officer could ever exercise his office toward any non-elected man; the pastoral relation could never be fixed without knowing beforehand who are the elect of God, or else no person, however blasphemous and abominable, could be kept out of a church, because such "blasphemer" and "injurious" may possibly be a "chosen vessel." The body, then, here described, must be the visible church catholic. (See Mason, ut supra.)

It may be further noted that this body is represented, here and in Eph. 4, as endowed with sundry gifts, means of salvation and



edification, "ministry, oracles and ordinances." These means of salvation are *external* and *visible*; a visible bible, a visible ministry, visible worship, sacraments, discipline, &c.: and if the church and the ordinances committed to her are not of opposite natures, the fact that the ordinances have a solid external existence, is proof that the church has also. Indeed, if the New Testament church is not the same great society which God formerly erected for the praise of His glory, and to which he committed the ancient oracles (Rom., 3: 2), then these oracles form no part of the trust committed to the church of the New Testament, and belong not to the rule of her faith, which is contrary to the whole drift of scripture teaching in regard to the relation between the Old and New Testaments. (Mason, *ut supra*.)

Finally, the general principle of the church visible is so inseparable from the christian style and doctrine, that its most strenuous opposers are unconsciously admitting it every hour of their lives. They talk habitually of the "church," the "faith of the church," the "worship of the church," "God's dealings with His church," and a thousand things of like import; and they mean by "church," in such phrases, something different from "the elect," and from a "particular congregation;" and that something, if they will analyze it, will turn out to be the visible church catholic, or the "aggregate body of those who profess the true religion, all making up but *one* society of which the Bible is the statute-book, Jesus Christ the head, and a covenant relation the uniting bond." (Mason, p. 26.)

## VII.

### FIRST ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH VISIBLE.

I noticed at the beginning of No. VI. the traces of the church in the times before Abraham. But, until the time of the father of the faithful, it cannot be said to have been formally organized upon the principle of visible unity. The account of this organization is to be looked for among the transactions of that memorable period which elapsed between the call of Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees, and the birth of Isaac. On the first



of these occasions Jehovah gave him a double promise: (1). A numerous progeny and great personal prosperity. (Gen. 12: 2, 3.) (2). That he should be the medium of conveying extensive blessings to the world (5: 3). And to these promises may be referred all the communications which God subsequently made to him. Called up at different times, explained, expounded and confirmed, each one of them became the basis of an appropriate covenant.

1st. The first promise is repeated (Gen. 12: 7), with an engagement to bestow upon the progeny of Abraham the land of Canaan, which was afterwards (13: 14-17) confirmed in the most ample terms. And again, in the declining years of Abraham, the Lord came to him in a vision, and having cheered him with this gracious assurance, "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward," (15: 1); the promise was received and solemnly ratified as a *covenant* (v. 8-21). The promise of a posterity having been thus sealed never occurs again by itself.

2d. Fourteen years after the date of this event, God appeared again to Abraham, and made another covenant with him. It is recorded in Gen. 17: 1-14 (which read). What was this covenant? Not a covenant, either of works or grace, for eternal life. For Abraham had been "justified by faith without the works of the law," and had been interested in the covenant of God's grace before this. His eternal life had been secured many years. Nor was it merely a personal or domestic covenant. This, too, had been concluded long before, as has been shown. It recognizes, indeed, all that was included in the personal covenant, which it might otherwise be supposed to supersede; but it has features of its own, so peculiar, that it cannot be considered in any other light than that of a distinct engagement. For, beside the solemnity with which it was introduced, and which would hardly have preceded a mere repetition of former grants, it contained *new matter*; it constituted *new relations*; and was affirmed in an *extraordinary manner*. (See Mason, page 33, et seq.) (1). New Matter: "Father of many nations," meaning not at all that he should be a literal father of many nations, but that he should be the means of blessing to all the families of the earth, in such a manner as to become what no other man, in the sense of the cove-



nant, ever did or ever can become. (See Rom. 4: 13-17; Gal. 3: 7, 8, 9, 29.) He should be the father of a spiritual seed, as well as the father, according to the other covenant (c. 15, see above), of a natural. (2). *New relations*. "To be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." Whatever relation is here expressed, it grew out of the covenant.

It could not be, therefore, Abraham's relation to God as the God of his salvation, for in that sense God was his God long before. It embraced his seed too, and God did not now engage to be their God with respect to eternal life, for all that was settled in the covenant of grace, and the privilege could not reach beyond those who were the actual partakers of the same precious faith with Abraham. Whereas, in the sense of this covenant, God was the God of all Abraham's seed, without exception, under the limitations which restricted the covenant operation, first to Isaac and afterwards to Jacob, including such as should choose their God, their faith, and their society. For he was to be their God in *their generations*, i. e., as soon as a new individual of this seed was generated, he was within the covenant, and, according to the tenor of it, God was his God. We conclude, then, that the covenant with Abraham and his seed, contemplated them not primarily nor immediately as of the election of grace, but as an aggregate which it severed from the bulk of mankind, and placed in a social character under peculiar relations to the "most high God."

To define precisely the nature of this correspondence, we must go a step further, and ascertain who are meant by the "seed." It cannot be the carnal descendants of Abraham, exclusively, for (a). Three large branches of that seed were actually shut out of the covenant, i. e., the children of Ishmael, Esau and Keturah. (b). The covenant provided for the admission of others who never belonged to that seed. See Gen. 17: 12—"not of thy seed." This principle was also acted upon under the law of Moses, when the seed of Abraham had become a nation. Ex. 12: 48, for the stranger's right to the passover. See, also, Deut. 23: 7, 8, where the Egyptian, descending from Ham, is put on the same footing with the Edomite, descending from Abraham. (c). Abraham was to be father of *many nations*; "the many nations" being equivalent to "all the families of the earth," in one



form of the promise. (Comp. Romans 4, with Gal. 3.) These "many nations" were the "seed" of him who was their "father:" the seed in the same sense in which he was the "father." But the covenant was with Abraham and his seed; therefore, these "many nations" were included in the covenant.

3d. This covenant was affirmed in an extraordinary manner, viz: by the rite of *circumcision*. The uses of this rite were two: (1). It certified to the seed of Abraham, that the covenant with their great progenitor was in force; that they were entitled to all the benefits immediately derived from it. (2). It was a seal of of "the righteousness," &c. (Rom. 4: 11), and as such certified: (a) that Abraham was justified by faith; (b) that the doctrine and the privilege of the righteousness of faith were to be perpetuated among his seed by the operation of God's covenant with him: and, therefore, that all who *believed* were children of Abraham, and personally interested in the righteousness by which he was justified.

II. This covenant never has been annulled. See the argument in the third of Galatians, where the apostle shows (1), that the Sinaitic covenant did not and could not annul it; and (2), that it was still in force, so that all who believed were Abraham's children or seed, and heirs of the promise—(v. 29.) But more particularly, it is to be noted, that according to Paul: 1st. The promise that Abraham should be the father of many nations, could not be fulfilled till the Gentiles were brought in, or until the Christian dispensation. The "promise" upon which his argument turns, is: "I will be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee." The Abrahamic covenant, therefore, is still in force. (Comp. Heb. 8: 6-13). 2d. If not, then the *visible church, under the gospel*, is not in covenant with God; and if no covenant, no promises: if no promises, then the Christian church is worse off than the Levitical. See Isaiah 59: 21, 22, which is a prediction of New Testament times, but it has no meaning if there is no covenant with the Christian visible church. (Comp. Romans, 11: 26, where the apostle represents the fulfilment of the promise as still future.) But the promise, by its very terms, is given to the church, in "covenant;" her members, in constant succession, are the "seed" out of whose mouth the Spirit shall not depart; and



when the Jews are restored, they will be brought into this very covenanted church, and be again recognized as a part of the seed. 3d. In arguing the rejection of the Jews, and their future restoration, and the creation of the Gentiles, the apostle reasons upon false principles, if the Abrahamic covenant has ended. (See Romans, 11: 17-24).

Note the mistake which was made by the Pharisees who came to John the Baptist (Matt. 3), and which John removes so effectually in verse 9th, that the Abrahamic covenant and the Sinaitic were the same; and, therefore, that until the Abrahamic covenant expired, the Jews could not be cast off. (See and compare Gal. 3, with Heb. 8: 6-13.) Paul, as well as John the Baptist, evidently taught that the Abrahamic covenant might survive the casting off of the Jews. In the foregoing account of the nature of the covenant with Abraham, it will be seen that the community organized upon it possessed the three elements which are essential to the constitution of such a body. These elements, according to Whately, (Essays on the Kingdom of Christ, Es. 2,) are officers, rules, and penalties by which the rules are enforced: (a.) Officers; the church being at first a "church in the house," all official authority was lodged in the head of the house. (b.) Rules; obedience to God's commandments, and faith in his promise—both signified by the sign of circumcision. (c.) Penalties: expulsion or excommunication. The officers under the Sinaitic covenant were priests and Levites, but there can be no doubt that the patriarchal or family church continued, even under the outward Levitical form; and at a later period (after the captivity) become more prominent than the Levitical form. In this the *elders* were the officers; and, indeed, circumcision and the passover were eminently *family institutions*. And the church, after the coming of Christ, emerges once more as a church, under the government of *elders*. The object of faith and the moral law were the same in all stages. The penalty of excommunication was also the same. The visible community was the same, therefore, through all changes of dispensation. And the definition of this community is the definition of the visible church. The church that now is, therefore, was organized in the family of Abraham, in two ways: 1st. By a credible profession of the



Add the following: Acts 2: 38, 39, where note the following points:

1st. The sameness of the *form* (The Introductory Lecture on History) of the church. "The promise is unto you," &c. It matters not whether this promise be that of the Messiah or the Spirit, for they go together, and one is nothing without the *other*. The revelation of salvation, upon which the church is organized, is then the same under the law and under the gospel.

2d. The constituents of the church are the same, *believers* and *their children*.

3d. The differences in the church, under the two dispensations, are these: (1.) Under the gospel the requirements for church communion are more spiritual than under the law, "Repent, and"—a large gift of the Holy Ghost—"ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (2.) The initiatory seal is changed: "baptism," instead of circumcision. (3.) The church is more Catholic under the gospel, to all that are afar off, &c. Some of these points will be considered more fully hereafter. See also Acts 3: 25, 26, with the notes of my sermon thereon.

## VIII.

### METHOD OF PERPETUATING THE CHURCH VISIBLE.

The next question that claims our attention is the mode in which the visible church is perpetuated, or its privileges, the privileges of the Abrahamic covenant transmitted. How is a succession of the "seed" preserved? The definition given of the visible church, indicates that this is done in two ways: 1st, By a credible profession of the true religion; 2d. By hereditary descent. Of these, in their order.

1st. Under all the dispensations of the church, the individual who was without the bounds of the covenant previous to his being of adult age, was to be admitted on his *personal faith* in that religion which the covenant was intended to secure. (Mason, No. III, page 47.) Till then he was to be considered an "alien," "foreigner," "stranger." Upon this point there is a general



agreement. But as to what is implied in this personal faith, there is no small diversity of views.

(1.) Some contend (as for example John Locke, in his Reasonableness of Christianity), "that all that is necessary is a general profession of the truth; under the gospel a general profession of belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." But this is the sum of the gospel; and an intelligent reception of this proposition as the object of faith, involves a reception of the whole testimony of God. See I Cor. 12: 3, in which passage it would be, in the last degree, absurd to say that the meaning is, "no man can pronounce the words, Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." See also I John 5: 1, 5. And if this could not be the meaning then, when Christianity was a new thing among the heathen, much less would it do now when Christianity is learned by rote by millions of children.

(2.) Others think that a fuller profession of faith in the doctrine of revelation should be required, without solicitude as to the question whether these doctrines have been felt in their saving, transforming power. This seems to be the principle acted upon in some branches of the Presbyterian Church, in which persons of fair moral character, who can answer the questions in the catechism, are admitted to the Lord's table—herein differing from other churches (which they accuse of popery,) only in demanding more knowledge. It is a sufficient answer to this view to say, that it divorces truth from that which is its great end, godliness. Hence we find in such churches an unusually large proportion of orthodox wicked men, or at least of orthodox men, who show no spirituality. We must never forget that a bad life is a bad, if not "the worst," heresy.

(3.) Others again reverse the opinion of the last, and make the profession to be one of "experience," and not at all, or very little of faith in the doctrines of God's word. I have myself seen persons join the Methodist Episcopal Church on probation, as they call it, simply by giving their hand to the minister, and nothing was said or done by which any man could tell whether the neophytes were Christians or Mahommedans, as to their faith. The presumption, of course, was that they professed faith in Christ, but it was only a presumption.



All which is absurd, because a man cannot be a Christian without some knowledge of Christ. (See John 6:45; 16: 7-15—Even babes must know something, Matt. 11: 25-27); for he cannot be a Christian unless he has been *taught* by the Spirit who witnesses of Christ. The church is the great witness bearer, the pillar, and ground, or buttress of the truth, and knowledge is indispensable. A profession of faith must include the following things. (See Mason, page 53.) (a.) Acquaintance with, at least, the leading doctrines of revelation. (b.) Some evidence of the saving power of these doctrines upon the heart. (c.) An open, unequivocal avowal of the Redeemer's name; and (d.) vigilance in the discharge of religious and moral duty. (Mason, page 53.) And all these particulars are implied in an adult being baptized into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Further, it must be noted that the profession of faith upon which a person is admitted to church privileges, is a credible profession. The visible church, because it is visible, and its affairs administered by men, through visible ordinances, can insist upon nothing more than a profession which *seems* to be true and sincere. It is God's prerogative to judge the heart. And even our Lord Jesus Christ, who knew what was in man, and knew that Judas Iscariot was a devil from the beginning, admitted him not only to the fellowship of the church, but even to the office of an apostle, because he would have been adjudged to be qualified for church membership and office by the measures of human judgment. The doctrine, therefore, of Montanism, Donatism, Anabaptism, &c., in regard to a church which shall consist only of the regenerate, is a dream. It is false, both in law and fact; the principle upon which the judgment of the church is founded in this case, is the principle upon which every association of *men* must proceed in judging of the qualification of its members. The judgment must be founded upon what *appears*, not upon what *is*. A profession of faith in Christ, then, which is not discredited by other traits of character, entitle an adult to the privileges of his church. This is the first way of securing a succession of the covenanted seed, and of handing down these blessings to the end of time. (Mason, as above.)



2d. The other and the principal channel of transmission is that of *hereditary descent*. The relations and benefits of the covenant are the birthright of every child born of parents who are themselves of the seed—"I will establish my covenant between me and thee and *thy seed after thee, in their generations*, for an everlasting covenant." This is a characteristic of every public covenant which God has made with man. Take for example the covenant with Adam and with Noah. Every human creature comes into being under the full operation of both these covenants. In virtue of the one he is an "heir of wrath," and in virtue of the other, an heir of promise to the whole extent of the covenanted mercy. He has the faithfulness of God pledged to him, as one of Noah's covenanted seed, that the world shall not be drowned by a second deluge; nor visited by another calamity to exterminate his race. Now no imaginable reason can be assigned, why, in the covenant with his visible church, the uniform and consistent God should depart from his known rule of dispensation, and violate all the natural and moral analogies of His works and His government. It cannot be. There is no such violation; there is no such departure. (Mason p. 58, and read on to the end of the chapter.)

## IX.

### THE INITIATING SEAL.

We have seen that the Abrahamic covenant had such a seal; that it was the "seal of the righteousness of faith;" that it certified that the Hebrew, to whom it was applied when he was eight days old, belonged to the church of God, and was entitled to all the privileges which it derived from that covenant. And, further, that the right to this seal belonged not only to the literal, but to the covenanted seed, as is clear from the provision made for the circumcision of those who were "not" of the literal "seed" of Abraham. (Gen. 17: 12, 13.) Now this covenant is still in force, as has been proved; and if the rite of circumcision had not been abrogated, it would still be the duty of professing parents to apply it to their male offspring. But circumcision has been laid aside. Has the seal which it conveyed been abolished also?



If so, then it follows, (1.) That there is no longer any initiatory seal for either adults or infants, for an abolished seal is abolished. (2.) That the church of God is under the operation of a covenant which has no initiating seal. If it be said that baptism is such a seal, then it follows that baptism has come in the place of circumcision; and if so, then God has a visible church, in sealed covenant with Himself, distinct from that church which is composed of the elect only, and as he has never made a new visible church, nor drawn back from His old engagements, that church must be the one which was organized by the Abrahamic covenant; and then it follows, further, that the application of circumcision must furnish the rule for the application of baptism, and infants are to be baptized. (Mason, pp. 64, 65.)

In circumcision, and indeed in any ordinance, we must distinguish between the substance and the form. The substance of the ordinance, that which properly constituted the *seal*, was the certification to the person sealed of his interest in God's covenant. The rite of circumcision was no more than the *form* in which the seal was applied. The rite may be, and was, and is yet performed without any sealing whatever. The sons of Ishmael, the modern Jews, are examples. On the other hand, the certification might have been the same and the rite different—the perforation of an ear or the amputation of a toe, &c. It cannot be argued, therefore, that because the ancient form is laid aside, that the seal and all that it certifies have been laid aside too. It would be quite as just to infer that because the form of church polity is altered the church no longer exists. If it be said that the rite and the seal, though distinguishable, are in fact inseparable, and that the latter cannot be applied except through the medium of the former, the answer is, that the objection concludes equally against the existence of a church on earth. In truth, it is a fundamental principle that forms of dispensation do not affect the substance of the things dispensed. The covenant of grace has been dispensed under five forms, the Abrahamic covenant under *three*, and yet neither has been abolished. Therefore, the change in the form of the seal does not abolish it. But as circumcision has been abolished, and no one pretends that any other rite has taken its place than baptism, either baptism is that



seal, or there is no initiating seal at all under the gospel. If there is no seal then the privileges of believers are abridged instead of enlarged under the gospel, and in this respect the gospel covenant is not what the apostle affirms it to be: "a better covenant founded upon better promises." Baptism, then, is the substitute for circumcision.

This may be argued further—(a.) From the coincidence in the purpose and meaning of the two ordinances. They both put a mark upon their subjects as belonging to that society which God hath set apart for Himself. Both signify and seal that wondrous change in the state of the sinner whereby, being justified by faith, he passes from condemnation into acceptance with God (Romans 4: 11, 6: 3, &c.; Acts 2: 38; Colossians 2: 11-14), which doctrines of pardon and acceptance are exhibited in that society alone, which, under the name of His church, God hath consecrated to Himself, and of which He hath appointed the circumcised and the baptized to be esteemed members. Both represent and are means of obtaining that real purity which is effected by the Spirit of Christ, and is the characteristic of all those members of His church who are justified by faith in His blood. (Deuter'ny 10: 16, 30: 6; Romans 6: 4; Col. 2: 11-14.) They answer then the same ends; baptism being better suited to the Christian dispensation as being capable of more extensive application. (b.) From the scriptural manner of representing circumcision and baptism where they are spoken of *together*, or where baptism is mentioned in connection with the covenant of which circumcision was the seal. For one example see Acts 2: 38, 39. For another take the passage in Colossians 2: 11-14, above cited. In which note, (1). That both baptism and circumcision are represented as signs of *spiritual* mercies. It is for this reason alone that they are or can be used as *terms* to convey the idea of such mercies. (2). Circumcision was a sign of regeneration and of communion with Christ as the fountain of spiritual life. The apostle is treating of a believer's completeness in Christ. And in order to show that he means the *inward grace*, he calls it the *circumcision* made *without hands*, and to make all mistake impossible, explains his explanation by adding the "putting off the sins of



the flesh *by the circumcision of Christ.*" (3). Baptism, too, is a sign of regeneration and of communion with Christ as the fountain of spiritual life. In baptism, Paul says the believer is buried with Christ and risen with Him through a divine faith. The "uncircumcision of the flesh" is a state of unregeneracy. Here, then, again circumcision and baptism are employed by terms to denote the same thing—a believer's sanctification by union with Christ. He identifies the two ordinances as the same seal under different forms. But the two forms cannot exist at the same time, and circumcision has passed away. Therefore, baptism remains as the "circumcision of Christ," or Christian circumcision, and is expressly so called by Paul, as will be seen by comparing the last clause of verse 11 with the first of verse 12. Compare Rom. 4; 11, 12, where Abraham is called not only the "father of all them that believe," but the "father of circumcision" to them, i. e., he communicates the sign and seal as well as the thing signified. Now, if it had been said that he was the "father of circumcision" to the circumcision only, it would mean that the form of the seal, as well as the seal itself, had been handed down by Abraham to his descendants with the things signified. But he is represented, also, as the father of circumcision to the uncircumcised; to those who walk in the steps of the faith which he had while yet uncircumcised; i. e., these last receive the seal as well as the covenant. But circumcision has been abolished. How then is Abraham the "father of circumcision" to the uncircumcised? Through baptism which has come in the place of circumcision (Mason), and as there is no distinction between the mode in which Abraham has handed down the sealed privileges of God's covenant to those who were and those who were not of the circumcision; and as they were made over to the former and their infant seed, they must also be made over to the latter and their infant seed. If it should be said that the baptism of infants implies the application of the seal of the righteousness of faith to multitudes who never had and never will have that righteousness, and consequently that the seal of God's covenant is often affixed to a lie, the answer is that the same difficulty lies against circumcision of infants not only, but against the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper to adults, unless we can be



assured that all the recipients are true converts. But the difficulty is created by false notions of the church, and confounding the covenant of grace with the ecclesiological covenant. The seal of God's covenant does, in every instance, certify absolute truth, whether it be applied to a believer or an unbeliever, to the elect or to the reprobate. (Mason, p. 83).

## X.

## INFANT MEMBERS.

According to the definition of the visible church in our Confession of Faith, the children of those who profess the true religion are members of it as well as their parents. This has been already proved (*a*) from the fact that the Abrahamic covenant, which included his seed, was an ecclesiological covenant, and has never been abrogated; and consequently that the Christian church, which is founded on the Abrahamic covenant, must include the infant seed of believers. (*b*.) From the fact that all the public covenants made with men before Christ—Adam's, Noah's, the Mosaic—recognized the unity of the family and the identity of the federal status of parents and children. (*c*.) From the fact that baptism has come in the place of circumcision. (*d*.) From the recognition of the same principle in the whole course of God's providential government. When we are asked, therefore, for a "Thus saith the Lord" for infant baptism under the New Testament, we answer, where has God, in the New Testament, taken away from His people a privilege which they had always enjoyed? The burden of proof lies on them who deny, not on those who affirm. But we proceed to some considerations which tend to confine the right of the infants of professors to church privileges under the gospel.

1st. If they have no such right then God has not only departed from the analogies of former federal constitutions and from the general analogies of His providence, but has done so to abridge the privileges of His people under the new and better covenant. And when we consider that the children of believing parents share in all the *disasters* of the visible church, its corrup-



tions, its persecutions, its declensions, the supposition becomes monstrous that they are excluded from its privileges. It represents God not only as discriminating against His people by debarring them from a privilege, but as retaining the principle only for the infliction of calamity. (Mason, page 93.)

2d. If there be no infant membership under the gospel, then the church has no authority over the children of believers, but they are to her as Turks or Pagans. She has no authority to instruct or admonish them any more than the children of Pagans. If she had acted upon this principle she would long ago have ceased to exist. Baptists themselves do not act upon it. They feel, in spite of their own doctrine, that the children of the church do sustain a peculiar relation to it, and that the church is bound in a special manner to look after their instruction. At the same time it must be acknowledged that they are more remiss in this duty than sects which formally recognize the ecclesiastical status of the children of the church.

3d. If there be no infant membership in the Christian church, then God has inflicted upon *believing* Jews the very curse which He threatened against the unbelieving, so far as the children are concerned. (See Acts 3:23.) Who are the "people" in the passage? Not the nation of the Jews. For they were the rebels that were to perish "from among the people;" a people who were to continue in the divine protection. Not the elect. For God never "cast away His people whom he foreknew," and they who committed this crime never belonged to the elect; were never "among" them. If neither the Jewish nation nor the elect, it could be no other than that people whom He owns as His, and who are called by the collective name of His *church*. And the passage occurring in Moses is a proof of the unity and perpetuity of the visible church. What is meant by "destruction" here? Not temporal death. For that penalty was never ordained for the sin of unbelief in the Messiah. Not an exclusion from the Jewish nation, for this effect did not take place; and further, if it had, it was as likely to prove a blessing as a curse. It must mean exclusion from the communion of the visible church. This is its technical sense in the Old Testament. Now the execution of this threatening involved the casting out of the



children of those on whom it was executed, and conversely the preservation in the church of the children of those who believed. If the converse does not hold good, then the children of believers were cast out, and then the threatening was executed upon believers as well as upon the rebellious. If the Jewish Christians had understood the apostles in this way, it is impossible to believe that they would not have made trouble about it. As to the spirit of the Jewish Christians, witness the commotions about circumcision as recorded in the Acts and constantly referred to in some of the Epistles. The Judaizing teachers made circumcision not only a term of communion, but of salvation, and if their doctrine had prevailed circumcision in the Christian church must have been regulated by the Mosaic law, and this law prescribed the circumcision of infants. The only pretext upon which a compliance with this ordinance according to the law of Moses was binding upon the Gentile converts, was that the children of these converts were members of the Christian church. If they were not, the answer would have been easy. Whatever may be the duty of *adults*, there is no reason to circumcise infants, because by the new order of things, they do not belong to the Christian community and have no concern with its "sealing ordinances." Yet no such exception was ever taken. (See Acts 21: 21.)

4th. If there be no infant membership in the Christian church it is hard to account for the language of God's word respecting children. (See Mark 10: 14; Acts 2: 39, *et al.*)

5th. The supposition of infant membership is necessary to give any plausible interpretation of 1 Cor. 7: 14. "Holy" here cannot mean internal purity, for that children of professing parents are holy in this sense, is contrary to reason, to scripture and to fact. It can't mean "legitimate," for marriage is an institution existing from the beginning, and altogether independent of Christianity. It must mean separated and set apart to the service of God. (Lev. 20: 26.) This is evident from the contrast of "unclean"—common. Compare Acts 10: 14. The terms "holy" and "unclean" or "common," were precisely the terms for those who were, or were not, respectively within the external covenant of God, and were, therefore, precisely the terms to ex-



press the relation of infants to the church visible, according as they were or were not the offspring of parents who were, one or both, members of the church visible. The only plausible objection to this view is, that if the terms "holy" and "unclean" have the meaning asserted for them, then the word "sanctified" must have the same extent of meaning; and if so, the unbelieving partner to the marriage relation must become a member of the church in consequence of the church membership of the other partner.

Answer (1). The objection, of course, takes for granted the impossibility of marriage producing such a change in ecclesiastical relations (which we also hold). Then it follows that the whole statement means *nothing*. It neither means "holy," in the sense of being within the external covenant, nor in the sense of internal spiritual holiness, nor in the sense of legitimacy, and there is nothing else that it can mean. It is a holiness which is neither within nor without, neither in soul, nor spirit, nor body, nor condition, nor state, nor anything else.

(2). The covenant of God never founded the privilege of church membership upon the mere fact of intermarriage with His people; but it did found it expressly upon the fact of being born of them.

(3). By a positive statute adults were not to be admitted into the church without a profession of their faith. Hence, the doctrine of Paul must be explained so as to agree with the restriction of this statute. The believing partner does "sanctify" the unbelieving; this is plainly asserted, but not so far as to make the unbelieving a member of the church: this would contravene the statute abovenamed.

(4). The very words teach that this sanctification regards the unbelieving parent, *not for his own sake*, but as a *medium*, affecting the transmission of covenant privileges to the children of a believer. The question was, whether, in the case of one of the parties in the marriage-relation being a Pagan, and the other a Christian, the former or the latter should determine the relation of the offspring to the church, or whether neither should. The answer is, that in this case, where the argument for the children seems to be perfectly balanced by the argument against them,



God has graciously inclined the scale in *favor* of His people; so that, for the purpose of conveying to their infants the privilege of being within His covenant and church, the unbelieving partner is sanctified by the believing. It must be thus or the reverse.

This passage decides the same point in another way. It assumes the principle, that where *both* parents are reputed believers, their children belong to the church as a matter of course. (Mason, pp. 109-118.) So that the origin as well as the solution of the difficulty establishes the doctrine, that by the appointment of God the infants of believing parents are born members of His church.

## XI.

### THE RELATION OF BAPTIZED NON-COMMUNICATING MEMBERS TO THE CHURCH.

[See Thornwell iv: 325-337, from which nearly all the following has been taken:]

This is still an open question in our branch of the church. It is agreed on all hands that baptized persons are members of the church; that they are bound to perform all the duties of members; that they are subject to the government and jurisdiction of the church; but there is a wide difference of opinion as to whether the jurisdiction of the church is to be exercised on them as over professed believers, in the *way of judicial prosecution*. The question is not concerning the fact, but the mode of dispensing discipline; whether the same mode should be indiscriminately applied to all church members, without respect to the profession or non-profession of faith—not a question concerning the authority of the laws of Christ, but concerning the manner in which that authority should be enforced. This statement of the question shows that subjection to judicial prosecution cannot be deduced from the mere fact of church membership.

The commonwealth does not deal with citizens and minors, freemen and slaves, in the same way, though they are all subject to law. The question must be determined by determining the



ecclesiastical status of non-professing church members. What is that status? To answer this question we must revert to first principles. The two classes of which the church consists are not equally related to the idea of the church. The class of its professors pertains to its essence; that of non-professors is an accidental result of the mode of organization. There can be no real church at all where there is no professed subjection to the authority of Christ. There may be a church, and in the millenium there, perhaps, will be a church in which all are saints. Make every baptized unbeliever a true disciple of Christ and you do not mar the integrity of the church; remove all who have professed to be believers and you destroy the church as a visible institute. The question may be asked, if the non-professional element is not essential to the idea of the church, how does it get there at all? The answer is, that it results from the mode of organization, and the circumstance of non-profession is, in the logical sense, simply accidental. The profession of the parent carries his household with him. The church, like the State, is composed of families, not like the kingdom of the Mamalukes, in which there was no regard to natural successors, but it was continually made up of strangers and foreigners incorporated into it; nor like the beginning of the Roman commonwealth, which, consisting of men only, was likely to have been the matter of one age alone. If it be asked why the church embraces the family and is not restricted to professing individuals, the answer is plain. The children of the faithful are the heirs apparent of the promises.

In rearing a holy seed the church is perpetuated. They are all incorporated into the church, because many of them hereafter are to be of the church. Mankind, according to these principles, is divided into three great classes. 1. The true children of God, among whom alone exists the true communion of saints. 2. The heirs apparent of the kingdom, to whom pertain what Calvin calls the natural adoption and a special interest in the promises of the covenant. 3. Strangers and aliens, who, though not excluded from the general call of the gospel, are destitute of any interest in Israel. This class is properly called the world. The second class, though in the church by external union, in the spirit and



temper of their minds belong to the world; like Esau neither understanding nor prizing their birthright. *Of the world and in the church*—this expresses precisely their status and determines the mode in which the church should deal with them. As in the church, they are to be specially instructed, warned and entreated in reference to their duties, privileges, &c. As of the world, they are to be treated as impenitent and unbelieving, and to be debarred by the power of the keys from the communion of the saints. By the church's exclusion of them from the inner sanctuary, from the Lord's table, and by excluding their children from the ordinance of baptism, she utters a protest against their continued impenitence, and acquits herself of all participation in their sins. Judicial prosecution is not the only kind of discipline. It is also discipline to retain, as the church does, by an authoritative exercise of power, her impenitent subjects in a position suited to their character. The teacher who refuses to promote a pupil as really exercises discipline as if he had flogged him for his idleness. There is palpable incongruity, however, in subjecting non-professors to judicial prosecution; as in that mode of discipline the charges must be specific and particular offences signalized: there is a tacit implication that in other respects the conduct of the accused is blameless. You single out certain actions and say, but for these the person might be reputed a worthy member of the church. How can the church say this of those whom she knows to be dead in trespasses and sins? As the whole state of non-professing members is unsound, and not particular organs only, let the discipline of the church be directed against that state, and not against particular manifestations of it.

Judicial prosecution is further evinced to be improper for the class in question, in that the severest penalties which the Protestant church feels authorized to pronounce do not modify the ecclesiastical attitude of the offender. There are three forms of censure: admonition, suspension, and excommunication. The difference between the two last is in degree, not in kind, the last being more solemn in form and more permanent and stringent in operation. But, in Protestant churches, it never amounts to *anathema*; never dissolving the vinculum by which the person in baptism is related to the church and the covenant of grace; never con-



signing him to eternal perdition. (Calvin Inst., b. iv, c. 12, 5, 10.) The only case in which the church would be at liberty to denounce such a censure, would be one in which the party had notoriously sinned the sin unto death, but as God has furnished us with no means of knowing when this sin has been committed, He has virtually prohibited this species of excommunication. The highest censure is that of permanent exclusion from the sacraments. But this state of exclusion is where the offender is already; he is precisely in the position in which excommunication puts the professing offender. If it should be contended that there is an excommunication which puts the offender in the position of the unbaptized world, dissolving the *vinculum ecclesiæ* without destroying the possibility of repentance; then it would follow that the offender, upon the profession of his penitence and faith, would have to be re-baptized, and we become anabaptists. So long as the offers of salvation continue to be made to an individual who has been baptized, we cannot say that his baptism may not signify and seal his ingrafting into Christ, and, therefore, we cannot undertake to remand him to the ecclesiastical status he would have held if he had never been baptized. All that we can do is to shut out incorrigible offenders from the society of the faithful. If they have been admitted to it, we show cause why they ought to be excluded, and proceed to exclude them. If they have never been admitted, we keep them where they are, until they are prepared to come up higher. If baptized children are tried in judicial form, and are convicted and sentenced, what change is made in their relation to the church? Put out of the church? Then, how are they to get back again, but by another baptism? If they are still *in* the church, but *of* the world, how does their new situation differ from the old?

Again, no end is gained by judicial prosecution in such cases, which is not gained by teaching. To use a judicial sentence as a mere mode of impressing a sense of sin, is to confound the *potestas dogmatica* with the *potestas judicialis*, the key of knowledge with the key of government, which are distinct though not divorced. The difference between dogmatic admonition and judicial admonition is, that the former applies to all cases, the latter measures the ill-desert of the offender. The latter, a baptized



non-professor cannot receive, because he can do nothing which does not deserve suspension, as the lowest form of censure. The principle upon which the opposition to judicial prosecution of baptized non-professors proceeds, is simply that the mode of dealing with the members of the church, or of the state, or of any other organized society, must be determined, not by the simple fact of membership, but by the state and quality of the persons. Now, the state and quality of baptized non-professors is such that they ought not to be judicially prosecuted. Illustrate. The truth is, in every commonwealth there may be peculiar privileges and peculiar disabilities. Rights and privations may be alike conditioned by the qualifications and characters of the subjects. So in the church: all are not entitled to be made ministers, ruling elders or deacons; these are privileges which belong to special qualifications: all are not entitled to the privilege of the Lord's supper; that also depends upon a special qualification, the ability to discern the Lord's body. Now, if it should appear that subjection to judicial process involves also a special condition, then it would follow that this also, call it disability or call it privilege, cannot be universal. Now faith is such a condition; and to apply the spiritual censures of the church to a man who professes no faith in Christ, would be as absurd as to tie a dead man to the whipping-post and chastise him with rods. The possession or non-possession of faith divides the church into two classes, so widely apart, that it is simply ridiculous to think of treating them in the same way. In reference to the first—the church seeks their growth, because they are alive, or judged to be alive. In reference to the second—the church seeks their conversion to God, to make them alive by bringing them to Him, who alone can quicken them. Discipline is not for the dead but for the living, an ordinance for repentance, not for regeneration. God may, indeed, use judicial process for the conversion of sinners, as He may use a fall from a carriage, or the death of a relative, or any other providence; but that He has appointed it to be used *by us* for such an end, is a very different proposition, and cannot be proved.

Again, censures in the case of these persons are inconsistent with the fundamental duty of the church towards them, which is



to seek their conversion to God; for censures are not the seed of regeneration—the word of promise is that seed.

The view above presented has been charged with being a pernicious novelty. This is a great mistake. It has received the consent of the whole Reformed church. Two points were maintained strenuously by the Reformers: 1. The right of the church to detain from the communion those who had not the measure of knowledge necessary to discern the Lord's body. 2. The right of the church to expel from the communion those who, having been admitted, had proved themselves unworthy by heresy or ill manners. The only form which they employed, in reference to those who had never been admitted to the Lord's table was that of simple detention or exclusion, accompanied by all proper means, tending to conversion. Censures, specifically so called, they applied exclusively to professed believers.

The posture of the Reformed churches upon this subject may be collected from their *general conception of the church; their specific teachings in relation to the ends and nature of censures; and from their positive regulations as to the mode in which they should be dispensed.*

I. The idea of the church according to the Reformed conception is the complete realization of the decree of election. It is the whole body of the elect considered as united to Christ their head, as actually existing at any given time; it is that portion of the elect who have been effectually called to the exercise of faith and made partakers of the Holy Ghost: in other words, the whole body of existing believers. According to this conception, none are capable of being church members but the elect, and none are ever in fact church members but those who are truly renewed. The church was co-extensive with faith. As true faith in the heart will manifest itself by the confession of the mouth, the children of God, wherever they have the opportunity, will be found professing their faith in Him; and as there is no method of searching the heart and discriminating real from false professors but by the walk, all are to be accepted as true believers whose lives do not give the lie to their profession. The body of professors, therefore, is to be accepted as the church of Christ, because the truly faithful are in it. The gospel is never



preached without converting some. These will profess their faith and will vindicate to some society the name of a church. As those professors who are destitute of faith, they are not properly members of the church—wolves among sheep, tares among the wheat, warts and excrescences upon the body. The visible church, accordingly, is the society or congregation of the faithful, or those who profess the true religion, among whom the gospel is faithfully preached and the sacraments duly administered; and it is simply because such a society cannot be destitute of genuine believers that it is entitled to the name of a church. Profession must be accepted for the possession of faith. This professing body is what the Reformed symbols mean by the visible church. The idea of profession is not only prominent, but fundamental. See Calvin's Institutes. In their confessions, generally, the Reformers make no mention of children, not that their external relation to the church was denied, but because the minds of the Reformers were intent upon the communion of saints, which was not to be looked for by man out of the professing body; and hence, as the real church was there, that was the only body contemplated. The general aim of discipline was to keep this body pure, and that could be done in only two ways: by refusing to admit those who were too ignorant or scandalous to make a consistent profession and by the reformation or expulsion of those who brought reproach upon the gospel. And as the church is to be found only among professors, according to the Reformers, of course professors must alone be the object of church censures, of reformatory and penal measures.

2. Their views of the ends and nature of the church imply that the professedly faithful were to be the only objects of them. The ends of discipline, according to their views, are the reformation of professors who have acted inconsistently with their profession, the separation of the chaff from the wheat, and the vindication of the character of the church; all of which imply that discipline is exercised only upon professors. Explain.

3. The same conclusion may be deduced from the mode in which they prescribed censures to be dispensed. This mode was three-fold, viz: admonition, suspension and excommunication; and these degrees generally follow in the order named. And



there is no intimation given that offenders are not equally subject to all. He who was admonished, if he proved incorrigible, might be suspended from the supper, and he who was thus suspended, if he continued perverse, might be excommunicated. The offender was uniformly regarded as one who was now, or had been a partaker of the communion of the Lord's table; and this is evidently taken for granted in the forms prescribed in our own Directory. See c. 10: 5-7. And with this view agree the Reformed theologians.

Finally, this view of the relation of baptized non-professors to the church and its discipline, is the view which has always been and always will be acted on by every living church; and any other course will lead only to "moderation" and hypocrisy. If we treat the professedly dead as we treat the living, we shall soon have a church which has only "a name to live."

#### THE NOTES OR MARKS OF A TRUE CHURCH.

1st. The occasion and importance of the question.

2nd. What is a mark? How many kinds of marks? What probable, and what necessary or essential marks? About which kind is this question?

3rd. What essential to constitute a mark? What meant by its being *proper*? by its being *conspicuous*?

4th. The state of the question—not about the marks by which a man may be probably concluded to be one of the elect, or of the church invisible; nor about the church visible, generally considered, as contradistinguished from heathenism: but about a particular church; how the true and orthodox may be discriminated from false and heretical churches; how a church in which we can be *saved* is discriminated from one in which we cannot.

5th. These marks may be more or less fully stated. The word only, or the word with the addition of sacraments, discipline, holy life, &c. But they all may be referred to the word.

6th. A church may possess these marks more or less perfectly: but all must possess the fundamental doctrines of the gospel. Distinction between essentials and non-essentials. These doctrines must not be judged by the private opinions of doctors but



by the formularies of the body ; and the word must be so preached and the sacraments so administered that the tendency of the whole shall be to gather in and more or less completely build up the elect of God.

7th. Proofs that the *word* is a mark of a true church :

1. From Scripture: John 10 : 27. The sheep hear Christ's voice ; and those who make a credible profession of hearing it are to be judged in charity to be his. John 8 : 31, 32. If ye abide in my words then are ye my disciples indeed, &c.—14 : 23. Wherever Christ dwells with the Father, there is his house and temple : but he dwells with those who keep his word. *Ergo*. Matthew 18 : 20 ; Acts 2 : 42. Further, as the science of contraries is one, the mark by which the false is discriminated from the true is a mark by which the true may be discriminated from the false. But this is by the doctrine they teach. Isa. 8 : 20 ; Deut. 13 : 12. Illustrate here the distinction of essentials and non-essentials. The criterion of old was the doctrine of God's unity, (Deut. 13)—under the gospel the doctrine concerning Christ. 1 John 4, &c. The sin of false teachers in both cases is *idolatry*, for God in Christ is the God of the New Testament. See also Gal. 1 : 8, Tim. 3 : 15, Eph. 2 : 19, 20, and thus even to the end, Eph. 4 : 11, 12. Hence the removal of the candlestick is the removal of the church. Rev. 2 : 5.

2. From the Fathers: Tertullian, Chrysostom, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, and even Vincent of Lirens, Bellarmine, and other Catholic writers : nay, the Catholic doctrine itself is founded upon it.

8th. But it is objected—

1. To make the Word the mark of the church, is to make the less conspicuous the mark of the more. Answer. The difficulty only exists under the Roman Catholic view of the relation of the two, the relation of the church and Scriptures.

2. Doctrine cannot be the mark of the church, because doctrine is either controverted or not. Uncontroverted doctrine cannot be, because all agree upon it. It can be, therefore, no mark of distinction, rather is it a mark of communion. Controverted doctrine cannot be, because *sub judice lis est*, and the decision can only be made by the church, which must therefore have been



determined to be a church previously and upon independent grounds. Answer. This, again, is a difficulty mainly on the Popish view—denial of right of private judgment; for then, what is controverted may be determined by what is agreed. The affirmative articles may be the rule by which we may decide the negative, as the *rectum est index sui et obliqui*. Illustrate this by the fact of the apostles citing the Old Testament. The Papists receive the same Scriptures that we do, and as truth is one, they are bound to show that what they hold beside the teaching of Scripture is in harmony with Scripture. Particularly illustrated by the doctrine of a mediator, sacrifice and intercession. Again: Answer by the argument *ad hominem*. The notes which the Papists lay down are controverted. *Ergo*, no notes.

3. The judgment of man is fallible. If, then, human reason judges what is true doctrine, it errs. Answer (a). That fallible reason does not always err; *in fact*, if otherwise, we should never know anything. (b.) Even if we accept the decision of an infallible church, we accept it with a fallible reason; therefore we err. Why should the infallible statements of Scripture become fallible when passing into the fallible medium of the human mind, any more than the statements of an infallible church, especially considering that scriptures are so much plainer than bulls of Popes?

4. The common people cannot understand Scripture, and therefore cannot know whether a church has the true mark or not. Answer (a). They can understand Scripture as easily as the decrees of the church. (b.) The contents of Scripture are two-fold, natural and supernatural. In regard to this last, all men stand on the same level: none can understand without the Spirit; with the Spirit, all can. And the doctrine which constitutes the notes of a church belong to this class—the doctrine of salvation. At any rate, the common people are better judges of those notes, than of those which the Papists lay down.

5. Making the Word a note, is making the form a note; but the forms of things are recondite, whereas a note must be conspicuous. Answer. This is true of *sensible* objects, but not of *intellectual*, in which last, forms are the most conspicuous, and the form is the best note, because "*dat esse rei*,"



6. But if the form is the being of the thing, then to make the form a note, is to explain the thing by the thing itself, *idem per idem*. Answer. This is done in every definition, a definition being only the statement of the genus and the specific difference, which together constitute the formal nature of a thing.

7. Every man knows the church before he knows the Scriptures; *i. e.*, the thing before the note. Answer. It is not true that he knows the church, *as a true church*, before he knows the Scriptures; and this is the knowledge in question. See Turretin, L. 18, q. 12, vol. III. (Carter's ed.), vol. III., p. 74, ff.

### THE PRETENDED NOTES OF ROME.

[See Turretin, L. 18, q. 13.]

Among the notes of the church mentioned by Bellarmine and discussed by Turretin, the chief is that of "succession," or as it is commonly termed, "apostolical succession." A full refutation of the Papal doctrine on this subject may be found in an article in the *Southern Presbyterian Review* for July, 1872. The following is a synopsis of that article:

I. All branches of the Christian church hold to apostolical succession in *some* sense—*e. g.* that of holding the doctrine or order of the church of the apostles. This sense has no reference to *history*.

II. Another sense of the term, and one to which the historical element belongs, is that such an order as that of Christian ministers has existed continuously from the time of the apostles to this day. To assert this is very different from asserting that this or that person is a link in one unbroken chain from the apostles down; as it is one thing to say that a certain country has always been under hereditary regal government, and to say that a particular claimant to the throne is entitled to it by his pedigree.

III. The fundamental principle of the A. S., as held by the Papal body, is contained in Sess. 23, c. 1, of the Decrees and Canons of the Trent Council, and involves the following points:

(a.) A succession of *priests* (sacerdotes). The doctrine of A. S., in the papacy, has nothing to do with "ministers of the word,"



(b.) A peculiar view of the *sacraments*, especially of the eucharist. Baptism, a mystic regeneration; the eucharist, a sacrifice (transubstantiation).

(c.) Peculiar view also of the efficacy of the sacraments—all grace conveyed through them. "*Opus operatum.*"

(d.) Power of *judicial* absolution.

(e.) Sacerdotal grace—the grace that makes the priest—communicated by the "sacrament of orders." *Christ*—the *apostles*—*bishops*—*priests*. The "indelible character." People have nothing to do with the process. Priesthood, a *caste*.

The doctrine, therefore, as held in Rome is comprehended summarily in these three assertions:

1. That there is a true and proper priesthood on earth under the New Testament. 2. That there is a true and proper sacrifice to be continually offered. 3. That the succession of the priests is secured by the sacrament of orders, and that there has been, in point of fact, such an unbroken succession.

#### IV. *Refutation.*

A. No such priesthood.

(a.) Universal priesthood of believers.

(b.) No institution of a special priesthood in the New Testament, analogous to the institution of the Aaronic priesthood in the Old.

(c.) No limitation upon the exercise of priestly functions and privileges on the part of the priestly people under the New Testament as there was under the Old.

(d.) The apostles are nowhere called priests, or represented as performing priestly functions. This is remarkable, as the technical language of the Old Testament moulds to so great an extent the forms of representation in the New; and the fact that the worship of the New Testament is a worship without priests, temples, or sacrifices—a worship before unexampled in the history of the world—is a proof that the apostles (who had grown up under the Levitical priesthood) in establishing it were acting under the inspiration of the Spirit. If they had established such a worship as the papacy now observes, they never would have been charged by the Pagans with being atheists. They use freely figurative, priestly language in describing the state, duties, privi-



leges, functions of believers; but not in describing their own official duties, functions, &c. (See Peter's style in 1 Pet. 5: 1-3, and compare Acts 6: 4.)

The place in Rom. 15: 16, is scarcely an exception, as the language is so plainly metaphorical that even the papist will hardly allege it in favor of his view.

(c.) The Epistle to the Hebrews is, in part, an argument to show that there can be now no priests on earth; that Christ is the only priest, and he in heaven.

B. No proper offering of sacrifice, for—

(a.) If no priesthood, then no sacrifice. (b.) The Lord's supper no sacrifice, for (1) silence of the Bible about any such character belonging to this sacrament seals its condemnation. But papists deny this, and refer to 1 Cor. 10: 21, and Heb. 13: 10. Now as to the former, Paul does not compare the Lord's table with the *altar* of the Gentiles, but with the *table* of demons. As to the latter, nothing is said about the Eucharist; and Christ himself is indicated as the altar in v. 15; and in v. 9 we are warned against just such a religion as Rome teaches, a religion of *meats*, not of *grace*. (2) The argument against the mass in the Epistle to the Hebrews is of the same kind, and is as complete as that against the priesthood. See specially Heb. 9: 25-28.

V. Pause here to consider the doctrine of "sacramental grace."

(a.) The New Testament gives the prominence to the *word* and not to the *sacraments* as the means of salvation. See 1 Cor. 1: 14-17, 1 Peter 1: 23-25. Compare Eph. 5: 26, where the *word* is coupled with the washing of water.

(b.) Still more monstrous to assert that grace is given *only* through the sacraments. See Acts 10: 47, for Peter's view.

(c.) The Papal doctrine is heathenish, because it implies a magical effect. Its tendency is to infidelity and atheism. Destroys the evidence of miracles by invalidating the informations of the senses. Its legitimate result, Pyrrhonism.

VI. The very foundation of the apostolic succession is removed when the facts of a priesthood and of a sacrifice are removed. But we shall show, *ex abundanti*, that even if the



apostles were priests they had no successors, or at least there are none who can know and prove themselves to be such.

(a.) It is a principle of Scripture that no one may presume to undertake priestly functions without a divine call or commission. Heb. 5: 4. The papists claim such a commission.

(b.) The power transmitted according to them is two-fold—a power of *order* and a power of *jurisdiction*. The power of order, according to Bellarmine, is a power over the real and proper body of Christ (in making an oblation of it in the mass); the power of jurisdiction is a power over the mystical body of Christ (the power of governing the church), one branch of which is the power of judicial absolution. See Litton's Ch. of Christ, Amer. ed., p. 363, note. The apostles received the first kind of power—according to Rome—at the institution of the supper; the second in John 20: 22, 3.

(c.) The external instrument of transmission is the "sacrament of orders," the administration of which belongs to the bishop alone. The visible sign of the sacrament is the laying on of hands. The inward effect is two-fold. (1). The impressing upon the soul of an indelible spiritual character or stamp; and (2) the receiving of grace (*gratia gratis data*), not sanctifying but ministerial or official grace for the performance of sacerdotal functions.

This is a clear and consistent theory. If no sacraments, then no church; if no lawful priesthood, then no sacraments—at least no eucharist and no absolution; if no successors of the apostles, then no lawful priesthood; if not in communion with the bishop of Rome, no successors of the apostles. Hence, beyond the pale of Rome, no covenanted grace. If this doctrine be true, it is tremendously true; if false it is a tremendous lie.

VII. Examination of the last mentioned point—the transmission of the priesthood—in the light of Scripture, of the papist's own principles and of history.

A. Scripture makes no mention anywhere of the *consecration* of any church officers *as such*. All believers are priests, and are consecrated to the worship and service of God in any calling which his sovereign will may appoint for them.

B. Scripture makes no mention of any *ceremony of consecration* to be used by church officers in consecrating their successors.



The papists will not insist on the imposition of hands, as the first instance of this is Acts 6, where the deacons were ordained after having been *chosen by the people*. Besides, imposition of hands was so common among the Jews that nobody pretends that it *always* meant consecration: and the papists themselves use it in cases where it is not designed to have this meaning. They do not use it even in their so-called "sacrament of confirmation," though it is one of the three sacraments in which they pretend an indelible character is imparted.

C. The Scripture makes no mention of an "indelible character" in orders any more than in baptism and confirmation. What was the motive for postulating this mysterious non-entity?

*Ans.* Christianity being the new law of Christ, must present the same general characteristics as its predecessor, the law of Moses. Moral qualifications must, in a legal system of religion, occupy a subordinate place. The institution of the priesthood must be *positive* rather than natural or moral. The transmission of moral endowments cannot be guaranteed. The Mosaic law adopted the principle of *caste*, making the priesthood to depend upon birth. Now birth will not do for a spiritual and universal religion. Hence the figment of an indelible character and of sacerdotal grace.

D. The papal idea of ordination receives no sanction either from the Old Testament or the New. Under the Old Testament the will of God determined everything; under the system of popery, the will of man. The "intention" of the officiating bishop determines whether the grace belonging to any sacrament shall be actually conferred or not. And as no man can know whether the bishop intended to ordain, no man can know whether he was ordained. Note the cruelty of this system: Under the Old Testament, although the claim of any man to be a priest could be easily ascertained, no man's spiritual state was made to depend on the doings of the priest. In the papacy, though it is impossible to ascertain whether a priest be a true priest, a man's eternal salvation is made to depend upon his doings.

E. The contradiction of this doctrine to the teachings of the New Testament is glaring.

(a.) Neither the term "orders" nor the term "ordination"



occurs in the New Testament. It is certainly remarkable that a sacrament should have been instituted without a name and without a record. The word ordination is purely secular in its origin. The word *ordo* was the technical term for the senate or council to which, in the colonies and municipal towns of the Roman empire, the administration of local affairs was committed, and the members of which were called "Decuriones." The correlative, therefore, to the term *ordo* was not the laity as distinguished from the priesthood, but the *plebs*, or private citizens, as distinguished from the magistracy. Hence ordination was a putting into the *ordo*, or in other words, the choosing of a man to be a member of the governing body, or, in a Christian society, of the presbytery.

(b.) This account of the origin of the word falls in with the view of ordination as given in the New Testament. In a free commonwealth citizens are elevated to office because they have, or are supposed to have, a larger measure of the endowments which qualify for office, than the mass of their fellow-citizens. They are not elevated to a caste or rank because they possess gifts which have been altogether denied to their fellow-citizens; nor are they selected out of the mass as persons upon whom certain gifts are to be conferred in order to qualify them for office. They are chosen and inaugurated because they possess the gifts, and the possession of the gifts is to guide the electors in their choice. So in the church. See Acts 6, and 1 Tim. 3, and Titus 1. The gifts exist before the choice and ordination, and of course cannot be imparted by ordination. This fact is fatal to the prelatial theory.

In the church the gifts are imparted by the Holy Ghost, and constitute the proof of the call to office by him. The action of the electors and the ordination are merely the forms in which the call of the Holy Ghost is recognized and obeyed. The difference between a free civil and the free spiritual commonwealth, as to this, is simply the difference between a commonwealth which makes a constitution for itself, and one which has its constitution made for it by the head, Christ. See 1 Cor. 12, Rom. 12, Eph. 4. The ministry is given to the church, not the church to the ministry. There is no grace transmitted from man to man in a



line of priests *over* the church, but the very same gifts, grace and life in the officers and in the body. The church is the *principium quod*, the officer the *prin. quo*. Hence, vocation to office is both inward and outward; and the outward consists of election and ordination. It is because of this relation of the officers to the church, that the Prelatical theory denies and the Presbyterian theory asserts for the people the power of electing their officers.

(c.) Papists make a prelatical bishop the ordaining power; but Scripture knows of no such officer. There is no instance in the New Testament of ordination by one man. They cite, however, 2 Tim. 1: 6 as such an instance, and allege it also as an instance of the imparting of a gift by the imposition of hands. Answer: (1.) If this was a case of ordination, then it was either the same as that in 1 Tim. 4: 14, or a different one. If different, then Timothy was ordained at least twice; and what becomes of their doctrine of the indelible character and of the unreiterability of ordination? If the same, what becomes of ordination by the bishop alone?—for Timothy was ordained by a “presbytery;” and even if all its members were prelates the ordination was at least not by one man.

VIII. Examination in the light of history and of the conditions of the doctrine itself.

A. No such doctrine of succession as that of the Trent Council in the first three centuries of the church. The succession of the early fathers, a succession of *doctrine*, not of *persons*, except so far as persons were involved in the doctrinal succession. (Tertullian.) Evidence in the Donatist controversy.

B. The utter uncertainty of the succession upon Papal principles: The valid administration and the efficacy of the sacraments depend upon the validity of the priesthood. Now, no man can be certain that he is a true priest. The doctrine of “intention,” as held in the papacy, makes the matter altogether uncertain as (a.) to the baptism of the priest, and (b.) to his ordination. Further, he must know that the bishop who ordained him had been himself baptized and ordained by bishops validly baptized and ordained, and so on back to the apostles.



## IS THE CHURCH OF ROME A TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST?

[Turretin, L. 18, q. 14; Southern Presbyterian Review, vol. v., pp. 14, ff. Conf. of Faith, c. 25.]

1. State of the question: Not whether the church of Rome of the apostles' time, nor of the second, third, or fourth century; but the church of Rome since the Trent council is a church of Christ. Nor is it about the church of Rome generally considered as contradistinguished from Mohammedanism, Judaism, Paganism; but particularly as subject to the Pope as the head thereof.

2. Proofs that it is not a church of Christ—(1.) From the design of the visible church, which is to glorify God in the ingathering and upbuilding of the elect. Any church whose constitution is such, or whose administration is such that the tendency, on the whole, is not to save men, but to destroy them, is not a church of Christ. This is conceded virtually by Rome herself, in insisting, as she does, that there is no possibility of salvation out of her communion, because she is the only true church. Is, then, the prevailing tendency of Rome and her ordinances a tendency to salvation? I say prevailing tendency. Men may be converted within her pale, no doubt; and men may be converted in an infidel club, or in a theatre, or in a circle of boon companions; but in spite of the tendencies, as is evident from the fact that, as soon as they are born again, the atmosphere of such society becomes stifling to their new life; and they quit it as soon as possible. "Come out of her, my people," &c. Now, that the tendency of Rome is not saving, but damning, is evident from the fact that she has not "the ministry, oracles and ordinances" which God has given to the church visible for this end. Of these in their order:

(a.) Ministry. Contrast the hierarchy with the officers of the apostolic church. The people disfranchised and ground to pieces by the great iron wheel. The names they have retained, those of bishop, presbyter and deacon, but how totally different the nature of the offices. Neither bishop nor presbyter is a preacher of the Gospel, but a priest; and, when consecrated, the



priest has given to him, not a Bible as the symbol of his office, but the cup and paten, with authority to offer sacrifice, and that, too, sacrifice of the body and blood of the Son of God, for the sins of the living and the dead; thus exercising an office totally different from that of the minister of the word, whose commission was, "Go ye into all the world and preach the glad tidings," &c. The minister is no priest in the literal sense, for Christ is the only priest; he is not the only priest in the tropical sense, for all God's people are priests, a royal priesthood. The Roman priesthood, therefore, is at once the denial of the priesthood, both of Christ and of his people. The bishops are no spiritual rulers, chosen of God, through the voice of the people, and administering the law of Christ, but the tools of a despotism which consults only the demands of the lusts of power and avarice, and using heaven and hell as the sanctions of their anti-christian tyranny. To crown all, the Pope is antichrist, setting himself in the place of Christ (and therefore against him), as prophet, priest and king, and head over all things to the body, the church—lording it over God's heritage, instead of being a helper of their joy. Even the ambitious Pontiff Gregory I., in the close of the sixth century, pronounced the claim to be universal bishop, blasphemous, infamous, and a mark of antichrist.

(b.) Oracles. This includes not only the Rule of Faith, but the authorized and current interpretation of the rule. Under this head observe, (a.) That she has *added* to the rule which God has given; (b.) That in the interpretation of the rule, she makes the part which God has given bend to the part she herself has added; thus acting in contradiction to the example of the apostles, who, when adding to the rules of the Old Testament under their commission from God as inspired, still quote everywhere the Old Testament, to show that their teaching was in harmony with the Old Testament—that their religion was not new, but as old as the garden of Eden; (c.) That she denies the rule to her members, upon the pretence that the church alone has the right to interpret; thereby practically denying faith and repentance to the people, and damning them; thereby shutting out the Holy Ghost and usurping his office as the infallible witness of Christ. Rome decrees that God shall not speak to men except through the



atheists, adulterers, and murderers, that sit in the seat on the Seven Hills, and claiming to be gods and worshipped as gods; (d.) That the creed, thus derived from the infallible interpretation of the church, is not a *saving* creed. Not that it formally denies all the fundamental doctrines of the gospel; but teaches so much error and such kind of error, as to make the creed, as a whole, poison and not food. The sum of the teachings of Scripture, concerning the plan of salvation, is contained in 1 John 5: 8—the three-fold record of the Spirit, the water and the blood. The two last are emblematical of the two great divisions of the Redeemer's work—a change of state, and a change of character—justification and sanctification. The Spirit's testimony being the mode by which these blessings become the property of the sinner. As to the BLOOD, it can be shown that Rome is fundamentally heretical. Paul teaches that no creed which teaches salvation by works can be a saving one. But Rome teaches such a creed, resolving our justifying righteousness into personal holiness, damning the doctrine of imputation, audaciously proclaiming the figment of human merit, both of congruity and condignity, making Christ only the remote and ultimate cause of pardon and acceptance. As to the WATER, she makes holiness impossible by denying the blood. Pardon is essential to holiness, and Rome, in denying the possibility of pardon, denies the possibility of holiness. She is also *antino-mian*, expunging one of the commandments of the decalogue, and making a hypocritical will-worship to take the place of holy obedience. She is an idolatrous church. As to the *Spirit*, she is a Pelagian, or, at the very best, a semi-Pelagian.

(c.) Ordinances. The most of her ordinances are of her own invention; but even of those which God has ordained, she has changed utterly their *nature* and their *use*, so that they are no longer the ordinances of God. Baptism, the Lord's supper, ordination, changed materially and formally. As to the use, her notion of the efficacy of the sacraments denies the agency of the Spirit, and makes them *causes* or *laws* of grace instead of *means*. So that no sinner believing the creed of Rome and obeying the laws of Rome, can possibly be saved. She is, therefore, no church of Christ.



## XII.

## THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF CHURCH POWER.

1. The church may be considered either as to its essence or being, or as to its power and order, when it is organized. As to its essence or being, its constituent parts are its *matter* and *form*.

2. By the *matter* of the church is meant the persons of which the church consists with their qualifications; by the *form*, the relation among these persons as organized into one body.

3. The *matter* of the church has been fully considered in the preceding lectures, together with some things belonging to the *form*. We come now to treat of the other questions connected with the form; and, first, as to church power—*potestas*.

4. The nature of church power must be considered before the consideration of the several modes in which it is exercised, because everything connected with these modes, offices, officers, courts, &c., is found in the grant of power to the church itself, and the institution of a polity and rule therein by Jesus Christ, her only Head and King.

5. This power comes from Christ alone. The government of the church is upon his shoulders, to order (his kingdom) and to establish it with judgment and justice forever. All power is given to him in heaven and earth by the Father, and he is the head of the church which is his body, and head over all things else for the sake of his body. (See Westminster Assembly's Form of Government, preface. Isaiah 9: 6, 7; Matthew 28: 18-20; Eph. 1: 20-23 compared with Eph. 4: 8-11, and Ps. 68: 18.)

6. This power, therefore, in the church is only "ministerial and declarative," i. e., the power of a minister or a servant to declare and execute the law of the Master, Christ, as revealed in his word, the statute-book of his kingdom, the scriptures contained in the Old and New Testaments. No officer or court of the church has any legislative power. "Christ alone is Lord of the conscience; and hath left it free from the doctrine and commandments of men, which are in any thing contrary to the



word, or beside it, in matters of faith and worship." Slavery to Christ alone is the true and only freedom of the human soul.

7. This statement is opposed to the theories of—1st. Papists; 2d. Erastians; 3rd. Latitudinarians.

8. The Papists, by their claim of infallibility for the church as the *interpreter* of the Scriptures, as well as by the claim to *make* scripture (apocrypha and tradition), make the power of the church *magisterial* instead of *ministerial*, and *legislative* instead of *declarative*. Hence the brutal disregard, in that church, of the liberty of Christ's people. Antichrist has usurped the prophetic and regal as well as the priestly offices of the church's head. Hence his name *Antichrist, in the place of*, and therefore *against* Christ.

9. The Erastians deliver the church into the hands of the civil magistrate, some of them admitting one of the keys to belong to the church (the key of *doctrine*); others, more consistently, denying to the church the power of both keys, and so destroying the autonomy of the church altogether. This to be considered more fully hereafter. (C. of F., ch. 23.)

10. The Latitudinarians (I use the word for want of a better) hold a *discretionary* power in the church, limited only by the prohibitions of the word; whatever is not prohibited, or contradicted by what is commanded, is lawful, is a matter of Christian liberty, and the church has power to order or not according to her views of expediency. This theory is held, or rather practically carried out, in various degrees. Some, as Archbishop Whately (Kingdom of Christ), contend that ecclesiastical power is ordained of God in the sense in which the civil is ordained. (Rom. 13: 1, 2.) The "powers that be are said to be ordained of God," because God has so constituted man that he cannot live except in society, and society cannot be maintained except by an organization, more or less complete, and a government of some sort. Now, men of different races and different histories require different forms of government. The government must be the organic product, the outgrowth, the fruit of the people's history; and as, consequently, it is mere political quackery to prescribe the same civil constitution for all nations alike: so, in the society of the church, there must be a government, and the



government, must be determined by the character and circumstances of the people; and as no form of ecclesiastical polity is forbidden in the New Testament, the church is free to adopt any that suits her.

Others, (Dr. Hodge, for instance, in *Biblical Repertory* for July 1861,) afraid to go so far, contend that general principles are laid down in Scripture, but details are left to the discretion and wisdom of the church. This is obviously a very unsatisfactory rule. What are "general principles?" General principles may be either "regulative" or "constitutive." Regulative principles define only ends to be aimed at, or conditions to be observed: Constitutive, determine the concrete form in which those ends are to be realized. Regulative express the *spirit*, constitutive, the *form* of a government. It is a regulative principle, for example, that all governments should be administered for the good of the governed; it is a constitutive principle, that the government should be lodged in the hands of such and such officers, and dispensed by such and such courts. Regulative principles define nothing as to the mode of their own exemplification; constitutive principles determine the elements of an actual polity.—(*Southern Presbyterian Review*, July, 1861, p. 767.)

Now, if Dr. Hodge's general principles are regulative only, then he is as much of a latitudinarian as Whately. If they are constitutive, he is as much a "strict-constitutionist" as Dr. Thornwell. He uses an illustration which in one part would seem to indicate that his general principles are constitutive; but in the other, regulative. "There are fixed laws," he says (*Repertory ut supra*), "assigned by God, according to which all healthful development and action of the external church are determined. But as within the limits of the laws which control the development of the human body, there is endless diversity among different races, adapting them to different climes and modes of living, so also in the church. It is not tied down to one particular mode of organization and action at all times, and under all circumstances." Now the two parts of his illustration do not hold together. The *organization* of the human body is the *same* in all races, climes and ages. Differences of complexion, statue, conformation, *et cetera*, there doubtless are; but the *organization*



is the same. And this is the kind of unity and uniformity we claim for the church as a divine institute. Hodge, elsewhere, seems to acknowledge something like constitutive principles revealed in Scripture. He makes the three distinctive features of Presbyterianism to be: 1st. The parity of the ministry. *Congregation*  
 2nd. The right of the people to take part in the government.  
 3d. The unity of the church. I do not acknowledge these to be distinctive principles of Presbyterianism; but they look something like constitutive principles. We shall see, hereafter, that the second of these principles is no principle of Presbyterianism *p 109* at all, much less a distinctive one.

In regard to this latitudinarian theory, I observe—

1st. That it differs little in effect from the Papal and Erastian. It makes man and not God to determine the whole matter.

2d. It is contrary to the Protestant doctrine of the sufficiency of the Scriptures as a rule of faith and practice. See C. of F., ch. I, sec. 6, "the whole counsel of God," &c. It implies that in regard to a large sphere of human duty, and that, too, concerning so high a matter as the government of the kingdom of Christ, men are left to walk in the light of their own eyes.

3d. It is contrary to the liberty of the people of God. Dr. Hodge and others speak of strict Presbyterians as if they were bringing the church under the yoke of bondage by insisting upon a "Thus saith the Lord" for everything. We answer, that the liberty of the believer does not consist in doing what he pleases, but in being the slave of Christ. "Be ye not the slaves of *men*" is the apostle's command. And the assumption of this wide discretion by the church has been the great cause of the tyranny which has been exercised by church rulers over the poor sheep of Christ. Liberty, in the mouths of those who have the power in their hands, means doing what *they* please, serving their own lust of dominion, and lording it over the weak and defenceless. Witness the Pharisees, Papists, Anglicans, and the free democracies. Liberty is a mere word to juggle with, except in the sphere of the Spirit and in union with Christ. Where the largest discretionary power has been claimed and exercised in the nominal church of God,



there have the people groaned under the hardest bondage; for it is the discretionary power of the rulers to impose burdens upon the people. First prelacy, then popery, with the aid of the "Catholic doctrine," grew out of the notion that the constitution of the church in the apostolic age did not suit the church in its more advanced stage, and that a form corresponding with the organization of the empire would suit the people better, and not being condemned by the Word, it might be lawfully established. Hence, as there were prefects, ex-archs, et. cet., in the civil, so there ought to be patriarchs, metropolitans, &c., in the ecclesiastical organization. And as the civil pyramid was capped with an emperor, so the ecclesiastical with a Pope. But what became of the liberties of the people? So also in England—contest between Puritans and Anglicans. The liberty of the monarch, or the parliament, or the church to convert the *adiaphora* into laws, was only the liberty to destroy the liberty of those whom God hath made free. The "judicious Hooker" laid the egg which was hatched by the imperious Laud. Another instance, sadder than all to us, is the history of the Old School Presbyterian church of the North, which set up its deliverances on "doctrine, loyalty, and freedom," as terms of communion in the church. The word of God, and that word *only*, is the safeguard of freedom.

4th. It is founded upon a false analogy between a natural, social and civil, or political development, and a supernatural, social, and ecclesiastical development. In the sphere of man's natural life, it is undoubtedly true, as has been already suggested, that the form of civil polity must be determined by the character, circumstances, or, in a word, by the history of a people; must be the *fruit* of the past, and not an arbitrary theory or utopian constitution, founded upon abstract notions of what is best. And, consequently, since the life of every people is its own, and different from that of every other people, the government must be different. A striking proof of this is to be found in the present condition of this country, where two sections of a country have had such different developments that one must be held, by main force, as a conquered province, *because* it adhered to the constitution of the country, and the other has forsaken and subverted the



constitution. But the case is very different with the church, for the simple reason that her life is not natural, but supernatural; she does not *grow* into a free commonwealth, but is *free-born*, not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. She is composed of all kindreds and tongues, and peoples and nations. All the members, whether subjects of a monarchy, or citizens of a republic, are spiritually and ecclesiastically free: "For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Hence, in the early church, the subjects of a Nero, or Caligula, or Domitian were, at the same time, members of a free commonwealth. In the State the soul makes for itself a body, an external organism, through which it may act; in the church the soul, as in the old creation, has a body made for it by God, its creator. The polity of the church, therefore, like the body of man, ought to be everywhere the same organism essentially. It confirms this view, that the church changed its external organization only after she had become corrupt and had lost her internal and spiritual freedom. After she had become worldly in spirit, she became subject to like changes with the world, and this liability to change became the more marked when she became identified with the world through her union with the State under Constantine and his successors. In the middle ages, the nominal church had become almost natural and earthly in her life, and, of course, lost her freedom altogether. For a great portion of her history her true life has been maintained in small bodies of witnesses, whom she disowned and persecuted. And so in the northern States of this country, she has identified herself with the civil power, and exhibits more of the spirit of the harlot, upon the scarlet-colored beast, than of the spirit of the spouse of Christ.

5th. It is contrary to the plain teachings of God's word and of our constitution, in regard to the nature of church power. According to those standards all church power is "ministerial and declarative." The officers of the church are, collectively, a ministry, and each officer is a minister or servant. Christ himself condescended to be a minister, and in that memorable rebuke which he administered to the ambition of his disciples, he informs them that the power which they are to exercise in the



church is unlike that of civil rulers, even of those civil rulers whose administration has entitled them to the denomination of "benefactors;" for it is a power of *service*, of obedience to him for the sake of his church, and not a power of lordship or dominion. The only honor in the church is the honor of hard work for the church. The power of a preacher is the power of a minister or servant to declare his Master's will, both in reference to the *credenda* and the *agenda* in preaching. The power of a ruling elder is the power to do the like in ruling, and especially to apply that will in the actual exercise of discipline. A presbytery, whether congregational, provincial or general, is a body of servants or ministers to declare the law and find the facts and render a verdict, such as is authorized by the word of Christ, who has established the court, created the judges, and defined their functions. A deacon, as his very name signifies, is a servant to do his Master's will in regard to the collection, custody, and distribution of the revenues of his kingdom.

6th. Lastly, it is contrary to the nature of the believer's *life*, which is a life of faith and of obedience, implying a divine testimony and a divine command. If the church officers, then, have power to make institutions and create officers which God has not ordained, then the people have the right to refuse obedience, and there is a dead lock in the machinery. There is no power to enforce obedience, for all church power is moral and spiritual, and no man can be required to promise or render obedience except in the Lord.

11. All church power then is simply "ministerial or declarative." The Bible is a positive charter—a definite constitution—and what is not granted, is, for that reason, held to be forbidden. A constitution, from the nature of the case, can only prescribe what *must be*. If it should attempt, explicitly, to forbid everything which human ingenuity, malice, or audacity might invent, the world could scarcely contain the things that should be written. The whole function of the church, therefore, is confined to interpretation and obedience of the *word*. All additions to the word, if not *explicitly* prohibited, are at least prohibited *implicitly* in the general command that *nothing be added*.

12. This ministerial and declarative power of the church has



been distributed in the books into several classes. For instance, in the Second Book of Discipline of the Kirk of Scotland, Andrew Melville says: "The whole policy of the Kirk consisteth in three things, viz: in *doctrine, discipline* and *distribution*," where the alliteration is used for a mnemonic purpose. "Discipline" is used in the wide sense of government and "distribution" for everything pertaining to the office of deacon. Others divide church power into *dogmatic* and *judicial*, or *disciplinary*, corresponding with the symbol of the "keys"—the key of knowledge and the key of discipline or government; or where the figure is that of a pastor or shepherd instead of a steward—the *staff* "Beauty" and the staff "Bands." Zech. 11: 7. There is a distribution of this power better still (see Turretin *ut supra*) into *dogmatic, diatactic* and *diacritic*. The first relating to doctrine, the second to polity and administration, the third to the judicial exercise of discipline. Another distribution of the potestas ecclesiastica is into potestas *ordinis* and potestas *regiminis* or *jurisdictionis*. (See Second Book of Discipline, chapter 1; also Gillespie's assertion of the government of the kirk of Scotland in "Presbyterian Armory," vol. 1, p. 12; of Gillespie's Treatise, chap. 2.) This distinction signalizes the mode in which power is exercised, whether by church officers *severally*, or church officers *jointly*; the potestas *ordinis* being a *several* power; the potestas *regiminis*, a *joint* power. Teaching may be either. The preacher exercises the power of order when he preaches the gospel; a church court exercises the power of government when it composes or issues a creed, or when it testifies for the doctrine or precepts of Christ, and against errors and immoralities. It is teaching, and that jointly, the word of Christ, either in regard to what we are to believe concerning God, or what God requires of us. The *dogmatic* power, therefore, may be either jointly or severally exercised. The *diatactic* and the *diacritic* must be exercised *jointly*, and, therefore, belong to the potestas *regiminis* or *jurisdictionis*. The Westminster standards are composed and arranged according to this division. The Confession of Faith and the Catechisms belong to the potestas *dogmatica*; the Form of Government, the Directory for Worship, and the Rules of Order mainly to the potestas *diatactica*; the (Canons) of Discipline mainly to the potestas *diacritica*.

*Power made  
pot. ordinis  
the power  
over Christ  
real body  
in Eucharist  
Pot. regiminis  
the power o  
ver Christ  
magical bo  
Government*

*Rules*



13. Proof that this power belongs to the church. 1st. From the gift of the keys. Matthew 16: 19, 20; 18: 18; John 20: 22, 23. 2d. From the nature of society. This power constitutes the bands and joints by which it is at once able to live and to act. 3rd. From the existence of offices in the church: but office implies power. 4th. From the titles given to these offices in 1 Tim. 5: 17, 1 Thess. 5: 12, Heb. 13: 17, Acts 20: 28, 1 Cor. 4: 1, 2; Tit. 1: 7; 1 Cor. 12: 28. 5th. From passages of Scripture in which the exercise of this power is mentioned, such as 2 Cor. 10: 8; also as 4, 5, 6; 2 Cor. 13: 10, where "power" corresponds with potestas. Also 1 Cor. 5: 3, 4, 5. 6th. From the fact that a distinction was made, even in the Old Testament, between the civil and the ecclesiastical power; but of this more hereafter.

14. As to the *diatactic* power of the church something must be said more particularly, for it is here that the greatest controversies have arisen. How far does this arranging, ordering power of the church extend?

According to the view we have taken of church power, as "ministerial and declarative," this question amounts to the same as the question, "How far, and in what sense, has the church discretionary power over details of order, worship, &c.?" We have seen that there is no legislative power in the church, properly so called, but only a *judicial* and administrative power. The law is in the Bible and nowhere else, and Christ is the only law-giver. But all the details of the application of the law are not given, and could not have been given without swelling the book to dimensions utterly incompatible with its ready use as a rule. Voluminous as human law is, it cannot enter into minutiae, *e. g.*, Congress by law establishes the Department of War, or of State, in the executive administration of the government; but it leaves the making of "regulations" in circumstantial matters, or matters of detail, to the head of the department or of a particular bureau; and this officer, therefore, does not exercise *legislative* power in making such "regulations," but a *diatactic* power, the power of arranging and ordering under the law. So in the church, the *doctrine* of the church and its *government* and *worship* are laid down in Scripture, and the declaration of this doctrine be-



longs to the potestas *dogmatica*. But there are "circumstances in the worship of God and the government of the church common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence according to the general rules of the word, which are always to be observed." See C. of F., chap. I, sec. 6, and 1 Cor. 11: 13, 14; 14: 26-40. The acts of church courts in reference to these "circumstances," are executive, or administrative, or diatactic "*regulations*." Circumstances," in the sense of our Confession, are those concomitants of an action, without which it can either not be done at all, or cannot be done with decency and decorum. Public worship, for example, requires public assemblies, and in public assemblies people must agree upon a time and a place for the meeting, and must appear in some costume and assume some posture. Whether they shall shock common sentiment in their attire, or conform to common practice; whether they shall stand, or sit, or lie; or whether each shall be at liberty to determine his own attitude—these are circumstances. They are necessary concomitants of the actions, and the church is at liberty to regulate them. Parliamentary assemblies cannot transact their business with decorum, efficiency and dispatch without moderators, rules of order, committees, etc.; and the parliamentary assembly, and, therefore, the church, may appoint moderators, committees, &c. All the details in reference to the distribution of courts, the definition of a quorum, the times of their meeting, the manner in which they shall be opened, details which occupy so large a space in our Book of Order (new book), are "circumstances" which the church in the exercise of her diatactic power has a perfect right to arrange. We must carefully distinguish between those circumstances which attend "human actions" as such, *i. e.*, without which the actions could not be, and those circumstances which, though not essential, are added as appendages. These last do not fall within the jurisdiction of the church. She has no right to appoint them. They are circumstances in the sense that they do not belong to the substance of the act. They are *not* circumstances in the sense that they so surround it (circumstant) that they cannot be separated from it.

A liturgy is a circumstance of this kind, as also bowing at the



name of Jesus, the sign of the cross in baptism, instrumental music, clerical robes, et. cet. (See Owen's Discourse on Liturgies and *Southern Presbyterian Review* for January, 1861, pp. 761-2.) With this view agrees Calvin. (See Instit. B. 4, ch. 10, pp. 28-31.) The notion of Calvin and our Confession is briefly this: In public worship, indeed in all commanded external actions, there are two elements, a fixed and a variable. The fixed element, involving the essence of the thing, is beyond the discretion of the church. The variable, involving only the "circumstances" of the action, its separable accidents, may be changed, modified, or altered according to the exigencies of the case. The rules of social intercourse and of grave assemblies in different countries vary. The church accommodates her arrangements so as not to revolt the public sense of propriety. Where people recline at the meals she would administer the Lord's supper to communicants in a reclining attitude; where they sit she would change the mode. (*Southern Presbyterian Review*, ut supra., p. 763.) See also Cunningham's "Reformers and Theologians of the Reformation," p. 31. "Of the views," &c., to the bottom of p. 32. Also his essay on "Church Power," ch. 9, of his "Church Principles," p. 235 and ff. Also Gillispie's "Dispute against the English Popish Ceremonies," pt. 3, ch. 7, in "Presbyterian Armory," vol. 1.

### XIII.

#### THE POWER ECCLESIASTICAL CONTRASTED WITH THE POWER CIVIL. RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO THE STATE.

We may obtain a still clearer view of the nature and extent of church power (the topic of the last lecture), by comparing it with the civil power, and considering the relations of the two organizations to which these powers belong. In addition to this reason for a careful consideration of this topic, the history of this country furnishes a very weighty one. The providence of God has, in the loudest tones, recalled the attention of the church to its own nature, as constituted and defined by himself, to the nature and functions of the State (which is also his ordinance), and to the relations between the two.



1. The fundamental relations implied in the distinction between the powers civil and the powers ecclesiastical have been recognized, more or less clearly, from the beginning of the history of our race. These relations are that of man to man in a state of society on the one hand, and, on the other hand, that of man to God, the Creator, the Moral Governor, the Judge and Sovereign Proprietor of man. They have been designated by different names, and have been the objects of divers kinds of legislation according to the diversities of age and country; but whether known by this name or that; whether, in practice, partially separated or totally confounded, the relations themselves have been, and could not but be, apprehended. The relation of man to God would be developed in the operations of conscience arraigning the offender before an invisible tribunal, and pointing him to a coming retribution; the relation of man to man would force itself upon the notice by the necessities of every day's existence. Yet it cannot be denied that in reference to few objects of human thought have attempts at articulate exposition been more unsuccessful than in reference to this; or that the wisdom of the wisest man has still more signally failed, by any kind of political machinery, to realize perfectly the theories which make the most plausible approximation to the truth. The sources and occasions of this failure will be better understood by a rapid historical review.

2. It is not strange that these relations should have been confounded, since, in the beginning, they existed together in the bosom of the family. The family is the social unit under the constitution of God, and not the individual, as an infidel socialistic philosophy asserts. It is the germ out of which grows the great tree of organized society, with its far-reaching and multiplied ramifications. In this germ the rudimental forms of both church and State existed; but they existed after the manner of all organic rudimental forms, so undeveloped and so mingled that their differences could not be perceived. The head of the family was both king and priest, governing and ordering his household in regard to the things of this life, and instructing and leading them in the knowledge and worship of God. The child grew up with a reverence for his father as the disposer of all his affairs;



the director, the authoritative director of all his thoughts and acts in every part of the sphere of his natural life, in all his spiritual, as in all his temporal relations. The father prescribed the faith and duty of his children in relation to God, as well as their duty to himself and to the other members of the family. In a word, he was the representative of God in all things to his household. When the child grew up he did not pass, as he does now, from a government of this sort into an organized political or ecclesiastical community, into a church or state, for there was then neither church nor state in the modern sense of these terms; but became himself the head of another family, and was invested with powers like those which his father before him had possessed, both temporal and spiritual.

3. This state of society, in which it would have been next to impossible to decide the question still mooted, whether the fifth commandment belongs to the first or second table of the law, continued in the line of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, down to the organization of the *nation* of Israel, when the distinction between the civil or temporal power and the ecclesiastical begins to be visibly developed. Before proceeding to consider this, however, let us look for a moment at the history of other lines.

4. The patriarchal or family constitution of society seems to have been lost, and political communities to have been formed sooner in these lines. The posterity of Cain seem to have made more *progress*, in the modern or popular sense of the word, than the posterity of Seth. In the organization of society, as well as in invention and use of the mechanical and fine arts, they seem to have been greatly in the advance. We are told in Genesis 4, 17, that Cain himself, after he went out from the presence of the Lord, "builded a *city*." He and his family may be regarded, therefore, as the founders of the State and of that complex material and worldly civilization which the State embodies and represents. They were the sons of *men*, acknowledging nothing higher than *human* wisdom and *human* power, and bending all their energies to the one end of concentrating the forces of humanity, and of securing in this way a worldly *summum bonum*, an all-comprehending good, which might compensate for the loss of the favor and communion of God, which they had deliberately repudiated.



They thus prepared the way for the Babel-builders and for heathenism, which is a worship of nature and its forces, and particularly of the wisdom and power of the highest part of nature, *man*. It is worthy of note that over against this organization of society, and continuation of its forces in the line of the apostate Cain (the sons of men), occurs the record of something like the organization of the true worshippers of God in the line of Enos. "Then began men to call themselves by the name of Jehovah" (Genesis 4: 26); *i. e.*, began to call themselves the children or people of God. But the time had not yet fully come for the organization of the church visible in correspondence with the State. The church thus formed united itself with the State; the sons of God intermarried with the daughters of men, and the progeny which resulted from that union was so gigantic and monstrous in its wickedness, so "violent," so regardless of everything but mere *force*, that God swept the earth with the besom of destruction and reduced the race to its original dimensions of a single family.

5. After the flood, appears Noah as a new federal head of the human race, and as the king and priest of his household; and the development begins again. But with the like results. The spirit of the beastly serpent shows itself in the builders of "Babel," (a name which, from that time forward, becomes a symbol of the power of *man* in opposition to the power of God, and, therefore, of man as abdicating the dignity of his nature and becoming a "beast,") who renew the experiment of their forerunners, the posterity of Cain; the experiment of living without God, by combining the individual forces of man. (See Genesis 11: 1, 4.) They built a city and a tower, to make themselves a *name*. They became worshippers of men instead of God; not man as an individual, weak and mortal, but *associated* man. And though God confounded the project of the city and tower, yet Nimrod, "the mighty hunter before the Lord," (*i. e.*, in the very face and in defiance of the Lord—compare Genesis 6: 11; 13: 13-2; Chronicles 28: 22; Ps. 52: 7)—the mighty hunter of mankind, appears upon the stage, as the founder of the kingdom of Babylon or Assyria (Genesis 10: 9, &c.), the first of those beastly kingdoms, the ~~sins~~ of which Daniel gives us in his vision (Daniel, c. 7),

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from a point of view of a worshipper of God, and which Nebuchadnezzar, from his point of view, saw as a splendid *human* image, representing the dominion and glory of *man*.

6. Here, then, we have the State in a colossal form, and from the circumstances of its origin we can expect nothing but an identification of the civil and the spiritual relations of mankind. If we read carefully the first seven chapters of the prophecy of Daniel, we cannot fail to see that the great subject is the contest between the supremacy of God and the supremacy of man; between the supremacy of God in man and the supremacy of man with God and against God. This is the real "conflict of ages," revealed in the garden of Eden (Genesis 3: 15), and ending in the triumph of the "Saviour of man," as recorded in the closing chapters of the Apocalypse. "The seed of the woman" (the "Saviour of man," God-man,) and the "seed of the serpent," the beast, these are the parties which divide the world and convulse it. These are the parties which are contending for the mastery upon the territory of the United States. Nebuchadnezzar refused to listen to anything from the God of heaven, who ruled among the inhabitants of the earth, until he became a beast of the field. See the remarkable narrative in Daniel, ch. 4. Taught by this acted symbol, he acknowledged that his view of his empire as supreme, and as demanding the homage of the heart as well as the external obedience of the subject, was false, and that there was a God in heaven, who ruled supreme, and was, therefore, alone entitled to be worshipped. He became wiser than some rulers now are.

7. We need not trace the history of apostate man any further at present. In all heathen governments the result is the same. The State, the world, is *τοπαν*. Religion is obedience to the powers that be, and this obedience, whether rendered to an oriental or an occidental despot, or to a Grecian or Roman democracy or republic, is the whole of religion, because there is no higher God than man in "humanity," or than man chooses to allow to be worshipped.

8. We return now to the line of the chosen seed, and to the institute of Moses. What was the relation of the ecclesiastical and civil power in the nation of Israel? I answer, that they were not entirely separated nor entirely confounded. They were



in that relation to each other which we might have anticipated from the *peculiar* calling of the Jewish nation, and from their position with respect to the other nations of the world. We are expressly told in Ex. 19: 5, 6, that the Hebrews were called to be a "*peculiar* treasure unto God above all people, and a kingdom of priests, and a *holy* nation." If this language means anything, it means that the Israelitish nation should differ from all other nations in this, that it should be a holy, consecrated nation—a nation of worshippers of the true God, in covenant with God, ruled by his word, and his word only, and not by the light of their own reason. When other nations, therefore call themselves Christians, and as nations make covenants with God and *consecrate* themselves to his service as worshippers, they *usurp* privileges which God has made *peculiar* to Israel. Any nation which boasts that it is a "kingdom of priests," is *protanto* in rebellion against God. Israel was not, in this respect, a model or pattern for civil communities, but a type of the church of God under the gospel. The relation it sustained to God is the relation that the spiritual body of Christ sustains to him. The alliances which it was forbidden to form with other nations were types of the alliances which the church is forbidden to form with civil governments; and the disastrous results of those alliances, the slavery, degradation and misery of Israel, were types of the slavery, degradation and misery of the church's alliances with powers foreign to herself in nature, origin, government and destiny. God was the sovereign of Israel in the sense of being their lawgiver, which he is of no other nation. He was their husband, and is the husband of no other. Transgression in them was adultery as well as treason. They were the inheritance of God, and he was their inheritance. He was their landlord and they were his tenants. Their taxes were acknowledgments of his goodness and of his proprietorship in the land and in its fruits. Nor was he an absent proprietor. He dwelt among them. When they dwelt in tents, he dwelt in a tent with them. When they lived in houses, he dwelt in a house among them. They were his family and he the father and head. None of these things are true of any other nation, nor can they be. They are all true of the Christian church, the body of Christ, and eminently true of



her as the substance of which Israel was the shadow. This being the case, there was of necessity a commingling of the civil and the spiritual. Hence, we find the kings (whom God gave to them reluctantly, if we may use the expression, because it sprang from a desire to be *like other nations*,) sometimes exercising powers "*circa sacra*"—about sacred things. We are not, however, to consider the king as taking the place of God, as his vicar in the theocracy. In the provisions of the law concerning the king (Deut. 17: 14–20,) we find no authority given to him to intermeddle with the faith, government or worship of the church. He is required to have a copy of the law, made from the standard text in the custody of the priests and Levites, and to read it, and keep it, that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren. When Uzziah undertook to burn incense, a function belonging to the priesthood, he was smitten with leprosy, a punishment almost as severe as that inflicted upon Uzzah, a private man, for taking hold of the ark of God when the oxen shook it. 2 Chron. 26: 16–23; 2 Sam. 6: 6, 7. There was no king-priest, no Melchisedek in Israel. See also 1 Sam. 13: 9–14. David meditated building a temple, and Solomon built it. David was prevented from building and Solomon encouraged to build by a prophet speaking in the name of God; that is, by special direction, and not in the legal exercise of his royal functions. It is further to be noted that both David and Solomon were themselves prophets, in a general sense, and acted and wrote under inspiration. Further still, they were eminent types of Christ as king—the one of Christ as warring and conquering, the other of Christ as a peacefully reigning king. But did not Hezekiah, Josiah and other kings destroy idolatrous worship and reform the nation? Certainly; they could not do otherwise and be faithful to the constitution of the theocracy, the fundamental privilege of which was the unity of God. And no civil magistrate can now afford to dispense with religion altogether. The primary doctrines of natural religion, the being of a God and a moral government, are implied in every oath of office and in every oath of testimony. Hezekiah and Josiah also ordered the keeping of the passover; but this festival bore a national as well as a religious character. Still it must be confessed that the kings of Israel exercised a



power about sacred things, which we contend that no king or government has a right now to exercise. They were kings of "a *peculiar* people, a holy nation, a kingdom of priests."

Again, let it be considered that the rise of the royal dignity in Israel was contemporary with the rise of the prophetic office, both growing out of the typical character of the nation. Considering the nation as a moral person, having an organic life and a conscience, the ~~people~~ and not the king, unless he was also a prophet, was the exponent of that conscience—Ex. 4: 16. It was not accidental, but necessary, that when God had, so to speak, given way to a visible king, he should have the prophet as his representative and mouth-piece. Otherwise, the whole constitution must have been subverted. The king was subject to the ~~people~~, because the government was a theocracy, and all civil and social arrangements were subordinate to the religious, as the shell is subordinate to the kernel, or the body to the soul. Judaism was a religious state, as Paganism is a political religion, and, it may be added, a political religion is Paganism and a religious state is Judaism. We find, moreover, that the prophetic office rose in importance as the tendency to apostacy, both in king and people, increased. As men and as citizens, priests and prophets were under obligation to obey the king; but as priests and prophets, they were subject to God alone, the head of the theocracy; a foreshadowing of the precise relations of the office-bearers of the church under the gospel, to the civil power. prophet

Upon the whole, it is a very striking fact, that in an oriental nation, and in a theocracy, public forms should recognize, to so great an extent, the distinction and separation between civil and sacred functions. We find the sacerdotal functions given to a separate order of officers, and the whole ministry of the tabernacle to a particular tribe; while the elders, the representatives of the patriarchal system, seem to have continued the exercise of civil functions. We do not pretend that there was an entire separation of the secular and the spiritual. It is possible that the synagogue, with its mingled jurisdiction over civil and ecclesiastical affairs, may even then have existed, as that jurisdiction was based on the patriarchal principle upon which the whole Hebrew commonwealth was organized. But we assert that we



have in the books of Moses what we find no where else in the East, a class of high and honorable functions in the matter of divine worship with which the highest officer in the State dared not intermeddle; and further, that where the two classes of functions came together the spiritual was supreme. If any argument, therefore, be drawn from Judaism in support of the union of church and State, it is in favor rather of the Ultramontane than of the Erastian theory. In this respect, as we have seen, Paganism presents a strong contrast to Judaism in giving supremacy to the civil power. But in both, as also in Mahometanism, the two powers are so combined that their history cannot be separately written. There is no history of the synagogue, or the mosque, or the pagan temple, as there is of the church. See Gillespie's *Assertion of the government of the kirk of Scotland*, Pt. II, ch. 7 (in *Pres. Armory* vol. 1), for some ingenious arguments to prove that there was a separation of civil and ecclesiastical courts among the Jews. Also Pt. I, c. 11.

9. We come now to the era at which the church was to escape from the trammels of the Hebrew state and to assume a separate and independent existence. This, of course, could not be done without a struggle. But to make the transition less abrupt and difficult, Christ so ordered it that the old dispensation was allowed to overlap the new for forty years, during which period the church was gradually but rapidly obtaining a foothold among the Gentiles and dissolving its connections with perverted and petrified Judaism, which assumed, more and more, an attitude of bitter hostility to it. The woman who gave birth to the man-child was preparing for her flight into the wilderness of the pagan nations. The "Acts of the Apostles," after describing this process of loosening and transition, closes with Paul at Rome, the great representative of the free church of the Gentiles at the metropolis of heathendom and of worldly power.

10. The first issue which was formally made between this worldly power and the church, was made by the Emperor Domitian. The persecution under Nero was partial and local, and it is by no means clear that the Christians were not persecuted as Jews. But Domitian claimed to be God, made statues of himself, to which he insisted divine honors should be paid. He was the



legitimate successor of Nebuchadnezzar and of Nimrod. It is his persecution of the church which constitutes the historical basis or starting point of the Apocalypse, as the persecution of the ancient church by Nebuchadnezzar was the historical basis of the prophecies of Daniel, the Apocalypse of the Old Testament. The question became again a practical one: "Is there any God higher than the head of a world empire? Is there any God in heaven who rules the gods on earth, and is able to deliver his servants?" The "conflict of ages" is resumed between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, between man without God and man with God. One of the sufferers in the conflict on the side of the woman's seed, is chosen to sketch its outlines and leading characteristics until it shall be ended in the victory of the Son of man, and the final judgment upon "the whore," "the beast," and "the false prophet;" which are, respectively, symbols of the church visible leaning upon the strength of the civil power and glorifying it instead of Christ—of that civil power usurping the prerogatives of Christ, and making war upon all who assert the supremacy of Christ—and of the wisdom of the world giving its support to the civil power as supreme, as the all-disposing Lord and the all-comprehending Good. (See Hobbes's "*Leviathan*," a happily chosen name, in which this view of the civil government is audaciously advocated. If this view of the symbols be correct, it seems that one of the great lessons which this wondrous book was designed to impress upon the church, was the certain pollution and misery resulting from the union of church and State; the certain corruption of both and the infliction of mutual wrong and outrage; the certain supremacy of the State over the adulterous church, and the final destruction of the adulterous church by the very power upon which she leaned. Rev. 17. The kings commit fornication with her (v. 2) and, then, when God's time comes for judgment, they burn her with fire. V. 16; Lev. 21: 9.

11. It was God's mercy which exposed the Christian church, almost from the beginning of its existence and for the first three hundred years of its career, to the bitter persecution of the civil power. The line was thus clearly drawn between Christ and Cæsar, and it was demonstrated that the church could live, not only



without alliance with the State, but in spite of all its power and hate. The church was taught that the world is enmity against God, and that any conformity to it, or alliance with it, could only end in the corruption and slavery of the church, as the Israelites of old were taught as to Egypt, Assyria, &c.

12. The Seer in Patmos saw (Rev. 13: 3) one of the heads of the beast "as it were wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed." If the civil power is symbolized as a beast, only so far as it is opposed to the church of God, then the deadly wound signified its dropping for a season its wonted appearance of hostility to cause and kingdom of God, to cease for a time to act as a beast; the which it could only do by assuming either a truly religious, or a professedly religious character. That this character was only professedly religious, seems to be indicated by the words "as it were," and by the healing of the wound. This characteristic is intended to apply, probably, to the whole period of the seventh head. In the corresponding passage in chap. 17, vs. 8, 11, the revealing angel says to John, "The beast that thou sawest *was* and *is not*;" and again he calls it "the beast that was, and is not, and yet is;" and again in verse 11, "the beast that was, and is not," is said to be the 8th and of the seven. These expressions seem to indicate the paradoxical character of the beast, a beast passing into the form of the woman, or in unsymbolical language, the world power, which is essentially the enemy of God, becoming or pretending to be Christian. The healer of the deadly wound indicates the resumption, or the breaking forth again, of its hostility to the cause and kingdom of Christ. Its profession of Christ's religion has not changed its nature. It is still possessed of the spirit of a beast; it shows itself to be a part of the kingdom of darkness, of which the old serpent, the dragon, the devil, Satan, is the head and prince (Rev. 12: 9; 13: 2, 4); the true successor of Cain, Nimrod, Nebuchadnezzar, and the Edomite Herods. Whether Nebuchadnezzar, or Cyrus, or Antiochus Epiphanes, or Domitian, or Constantine is the reigning monarch, the *spirit* of the power is the same, the spirit of the world, which is enmity against God. Hence all these powers were seen by Nebuchadnezzar in *one* image, and in Revelation 13, John sees the first three beasts of Daniel (7th chapter) combined in the fourth and



last. (See Auberlen's Daniel and the Revelations, and Fairbairn on Prophecy.)

13. This deadly wound of the beast, this apparent change in the character of the civil power in its relation to the church, took place, or was first exemplified, in the conversion of Constantine the Great, and in his patronage of the church in the first quarter of the fourth century. The system of that emperor was only a christianized paganism, as the result showed. Religion was still considered a part of the machinery of the State. The only difference was that Christianity was substituted for paganism, and the God of the Christians for Jupiter and the whole herd of divinities in the Pantheon. It was the old theory of the first centuries of the Roman republic with a new application. In primeval Rome everything was moulded by religion. Their *libri rituales* (to the Romans what the Mosaic ritual was to the Hebrews), according to Festus (see Legare's essay on Roman legislation), "taught the rites with which cities are to be founded and altars and temples dedicated; the holiness of the walls of towns; the law relating to their gates; how tribes, wards and centuries are to be distributed; armies organized and arrayed, and other the like things relating to peace and war." The same influence extended itself over the very soil of the Roman territory, and made it, in the technical language of their augury, one vast temple. It was consecrated by the auspices; it could become the property only of one who had the auspices, that is, a patrician, a *Roman* properly so called; once set apart and conveyed away, it was irrevocably alienated, so that sales of the domain were guaranteed by religion, and it was sacrilegious to establish a second colony on the place dedicated to a first. The city, by its original inauguration was also a temple; its gates and walls were holy; its pomoerium was unchangeable until higher auspices had suspended those under which it was first marked out. Every spot of ground might become, by the different uses to which it was applied, sacred (*sacer*), holy (*sanctus*), religious (*religiosus*). The first *agrimensor*, says Niebuhr, was an augur, accompanied by Tuscan priests or their scholars. From the foundation of the city the sacredness of the property was shadowed forth in the god *Terminus*, and that of contracts protected by an apotheosis



of faith (*fides*.) In short, the worthy Roman lived, moved and had his being, as the Greek writers observe, in religion. How striking the resemblance, in this description, of many things to corresponding features in Judaism. The grand difference is, that Judaism was a theocracy and Romanism anthropocracy. In the one there was a real consecration to God; in the other a real consecration only to the glory of man. But here we find the germ of the Erastianism of Constantine. So far is it from being true, that the union of the church and the State was the work of Christian priests, it was the work, remotely, of the "lawyer priests" of primeval Rome, an oriental *caste* transmitted to the Romans through Tuscany, at once by inheritance and by education, (See Legare *ut sup.*) and proximately of the jurisconsults of Constantine.) Subsequently the system was reduced to a more formal shape, and hardened by the lawyers of Theodosius and Justinian.

14. Its Pagan origin and character was soon betrayed. The church began to be moulded by the State in government, worship, and even in faith. It is necessary that the inferior should be moulded by the superior. Hence the ecclesiastical hierarchy corresponding with the civil hierarchy of the empire. Hence the temples, altars, festivals, images, lustrations, sacrifices, incense; in a word, the pomp and pageantry and hollowness of the paganized Christian worship. (See Middleton's letter from Rome.) Hence the persecutions of the faithful who refused to recognize this paganized Christianity as the religion of the crucified Nazarene. The autonomy of the church disappeared, and she became the slave of the civil power. The nature of the beast passed into the woman and the woman became the adulteress riding upon the beast.

15. In the course of time a reaction came, and the human mind, refusing to rest in the center of truth, swung to the opposite extreme, still holding to the union of the spiritual and the temporal, but asserting the supremacy of the spiritual. The woman would not only ride upon the beast and be carried by it, but would govern and guide it according to her own will. This change began with the policy of the Carlovingian line of monarchs and their ambitious attempts to revive the Roman em-



pire in the West. In order to secure the patronage and assistance of the church, they conferred civil authority and territory upon ecclesiastics, and the Pope himself became a feudatory of Pepin, Charlemagne and their successors in the holy German Roman empire. And here did vaulting ambition overleap itself. This very policy was the occasion of the wars between the Popes and the Emperors, which kept the world in an uproar during the middle ages; the church gaining more and more power as a temporal and civil institute under the direction of Hildebrand and Innocent III and others, reaching the summit of its audacity under Boniface VIII, and then gradually yielding again to the temporal power. Thus the popery of the middle ages became the Nemesis of the Erastianism or Paganism of Constantine, Theodosius and Justinian. But both Popes and Emperors united in persecuting the witnesses of Christ's supremacy.

16. Then came the earthquake of the Reformation. But this did not dissolve the union of church and state. "Luther had some glimpses of the grand truth that the spiritual kingdom of Jesus Christ is something separate from and independent of the civil government ordained of God the Creator, in the hands of Cæsar. But driven to shelter himself under the protection of the monarch who was ambitious to rid himself of the authority of the Pope, yet equally jealous of such an *imperium in imperio* as a completely organized spiritual government in the hands of the church, Luther was obliged, as he thought, to sacrifice a part of the spiritual prerogatives of the church for protection against the power of the Pope." (Robinson's speech at Cincinnati, November 8th, 1866.) Calvin had a much clearer conception of the church's autonomy than Luther, and would allow no interference on the part of the State with the discipline of the church. Yet he was bred a lawyer; he had studied the Pandects and allowed the authority of Tribonian to obscure the interpretation of that word of God, to which he adhered with a tenacity and fidelity unsurpassed by man. If Calvin had been a German instead of a Frenchman, he probably would not have seen so much of the truth as he did see, for Ultramontanism had the ascendancy in Germany. But even his imperial mind could not emancipate itself from the thralldom of "the spirit of the age."



17. His influence, however, is seen in the original Puritan party of England, in the struggle for religious and civil liberty in Holland and the other States of the Netherlands, and specially in Scotland. The reformation in Scotland from the first, more than any of the movements of the sixteenth century, rested upon the theory of the autonomy of the spiritual commonwealth, and it seemed to be the special mission of its martyrs to testify for "Christ's crown and covenant," against the lofty claims of the temporal sovereign. But after all the testimonies of its martyrs, and a hundred years of suffering, the seductive strategy of Carstairs, and the political Protestantism of William and Mary, and the settlement of the Scottish kingdom under Queen Anne, proved more powerful than the testimony of the martyrs, and at last subjugated the Scottish, as well as the English churches, under the yoke of Cæsar, leaving the piety and earnest love of the truth, which might afterward be generated by her doctors, to fly off in secession after secession till the present day." (Robinson *ut supra*. See also his lecture on "the American theory of church and state" before the Maryland Institute, Baltimore.) The fundamental defect in the position of the Scotch church (a defect to which the free church, notwithstanding its noble testimony, still clings,) is the doctrine that the State ought to support the church by its revenues; as if it were possible for the church, thus supported by the State, to be independent.

18. The Confession of the Westminster Assembly being composed under the influence of the Scotch commissioners and of Englishmen brought up in the Erastian establishment, could not of course be expected to teach the truth more purely, on this subject, than the Scotch. Hence it was changed before it was adopted by the Presbyterian church of the United States of America, as you have been informed in a previous lecture.

19. Such being the history of this subject in other countries and ages, we come now to notice, very briefly, its history in the United States. Most of the colonists who came to this country, came of course with the ideas of church and state which prevailed in the lands from which they came. They had learned something from persecution, but they had much still to learn. The New England Puritans established a sort of theocracy, thus



rushing to the other extreme from the Erastian paganism from which they had suffered so much; the pulpit became the expounder of public policy and of the law of the land; and the church was filled with hypocrites and pretenders to godliness. Roger Williams and the Baptists suffering persecution in Massachusetts, betook themselves after the manner of minorities, when oppressed by majorities, to the ramparts of sound principles, and founded the settlement of Rhode Island, in which they proclaimed, not only religious toleration, but religious liberty. The Huguenots were quiet; the Dutch were liberal; the Scotch and Scotch-Irish, who were the chief instruments in moulding the Presbyterian church in this country, were the next, after Roger Williams, to proclaim the true theory of the relations of church and State. Waddell, "the blind preacher," Wm. Graham, Stanhope Smith, and the old Hanover Presbytery in Virginia, on the ecclesiastical side, with Thomas Jefferson on the civil side, who, first of all the statesmen in history, caught the true idea, co-operated in establishing what is sometimes called the Virginia doctrine, which Mr. Stuart Robinson (accommodating the language of Melville) expresses thus: "There be two republics in this nation, one the civil republic of the United States, of which the man in the white house is the head; the other the spiritual commonwealth, of which Jesus Christ is the head, with which the man in the white house has nothing to do, but to protect the persons and property of its subjects, as that of other citizens." (Cincinnati speech.) This is the theory which was supposed to be the theory of the United States, as well as of Virginia, up to the period of the war. It was found, explicitly or implicitly, in all the constitutions and bills of rights of the States (with the exception perhaps of North Carolina), and is recognized by that provision of the constitution which prohibits the passage of any law infringing upon the rights of conscience. It is the clear teaching of the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian church of the United States of America, and, I suppose, was universally received by all other denominations, if not expressly taught in their public formularies and symbols. It is the Scotch theory, without the feature of State support, and with the voluntary principle instead.



20. But the history of this country has demonstrated that a refined and exalted worldly civilization makes no change in the heart of man; that he is an incorrigible sinner, and incurably disposed to walk in the light of his own eyes; that the kingdom of Christ is of no account to him, except so far as it can be made to subserve his own lusts. We stand amazed, notwithstanding the faithful warnings of prophets and apostles, at the reappearance of the beast, and the revival of the maxims of Roman civilians and mediæval canonists in the nineteenth century, and in "the freest and most enlightened nation of the globe." We are confounded, when we see the owls and bats of the dark ages flying about in the blaze of this boasted period of illumination, and statesmen and churchmen, in an age of boasted liberty, forging over again the chains and fetters of the ages of slavery and blood. Saddest of all, we see a church which has been accustomed to pride itself upon an ancestry martyred for Christ's crown, voluntarily pulling down his ensign and running up the ensign of Cæsar; a church which has testified "repentance" towards God, and "faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ," as the burden of its commission, now drivelling about "loyalty and freedom," and outlawing men who are as good as themselves, for no other cause than the holding of a theory of the government which has been held by many of the best and wisest Americans from the beginning. Once more, then, the church is called to testify for the rights of her only head and king Jesus Christ, and for the freedom and independence which he has conferred upon herself as the purchase of his most precious blood. Once more has she been compelled by the assaults of her adversaries, to study her own nature and to define her relation to that other ordinance of God, the State. These relations we come now to consider dogmatically, as we have already considered them historically.

21. The church and the state agree in these three points: 1st. That they are ordained of God. 2d. That they are ordained for His glory. 3d. That they are ordained for the good of mankind.

22. They differ in the following points: 1. In the aspects and relations in which God is contemplated by them respectively as the *source* of power. 2. In the aspects in which man is contem-



plated by them respectively as the *object* of power. 3. In the rule by which ~~theory~~ they are to be respectively guided in the exercise of power. Of these, in their order, we now proceed to treat more particularly.

23. First, as to the aspects and relations in which God as the *source of power* is contemplated by church and state respectively. I observe that the State is the ordinance of God, considered as Creator, and, therefore, the moral governor of mankind; while the church is an ordinance of God considered as the Saviour and restorer of mankind. We need not dwell upon this point here, as the illustration and proof of it are necessarily involved in the proof and illustration of the next, which is *second*, as to the aspects and relations in which church and state, respectively, contemplate man as the *object of power*,—where it is to be noted (*a*), that the State is ordained for man as man, the church for man as a sinner, under a dispensation of restoration and salvation. The State is for the whole race of man, the church consists of that portion of the race which is really, or by credible profession, the mediatorial body of Christ. The State is a government of natural justice; the church a government of grace.

24. The State is ordained for man as man, and is ordained to realize the idea of justice. We find it existing in the germ, when the race consisted of one man and one woman. The woman was in a state of subordination to the man. This subordination was not the penal consequence of transgression, as is evident from 1 Tim. 2: 11-14, where Paul argues that the transgression was the consequence of the violation by the woman of the order established by heaven, of her ambitiously forsaking her condition of subordination and acting as if she were the superior or the equal of the man. If it should be asked, where was the necessity or the propriety of an order implying subordination in beings who were created in the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness? the answer is, that the propriety was founded upon the diversity of capacity in intellect and other endowments of human nature, which it pleased God should exist in the man and the woman. If man had not fallen, it would still have been his duty to bring up his children in the knowledge of God, and to *direct* them in the way in which they should glorify God;



albeit these children, by the terms of the supposition, would all have been holy and without inclination to go astray; nay, more, in no danger at all of going astray, as they would have been confirmed in the possession of eternal life, by the covenant with their father. In other words, if all creatures, because they are creatures, need direction from God as to the mode in which they are to glorify and enjoy him, why might not this direction be given through the instrumentality of others, as well as immediately by God himself? There is not only no absurdity in such an arrangement, but there are traces of the wonderful wisdom and goodness of the Creator in it. Society is not an unison, but an exquisite harmony, a grand instrument of various chords for the harping of hymns and hallelujahs to the God and Father of all. Even among the unfallen angels, we have reason to believe, there are thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers—order in the form of a celestial hierarchy. Man having fallen, however, and the love which constituted the very spirit and temper of his mind, having given place to enmity, something more than direction was now necessary. He needed *restraint*, his appetites must be bridled and coerced. The law of the two tables, which, in his state of innocence and uprightness, had been written upon his heart, summarily, in the *positive* and *preceptive* form of *love*, must now be written externally, in detail, upon tablets of stone, and in a prohibitory form, “thou shalt *not* ;” and in reference to the second table, which prescribes the duties growing out of the relations of man to man, it became necessary that overt acts of transgression, which were not only morally wrong, but injurious to society, should not only be discountenanced by prohibition, but restrained and prevented by punishment. Hence arose a government of *force*.

25. The case, then, stands thus: In any condition of our race, the social nature of man must have given rise to the secular power. In a state of innocence, it would have been simply a directing power, a constitution designed merely to carry out and fulfil, without confusion, the blind instincts or impulses of love, love of self and love of neighbor. In a fallen state it has become, of necessity, a restraining and punishing, as well as a directing power. But in both conditions and in both forms it is



an ordinance of God, "the author of the constitution and course of nature." It is the nature of man to exist in society, and society is necessary to existence. But society cannot exist without law and order of some sort. Therefore government is as necessary to man as society, and for this reason is as natural to man as society. It may not be an original endowment of man, but it is natural, and if natural, then the ordinance of God. The perception of distance by the eye is not an original endowment of man, but the organ is so constituted by God, that, in the course of time, it necessarily acquires it; and it is, therefore, natural to man, and therefore the ordinance of God. Civil government, then, is a branch or department of the moral government of God, the Creator and ruler over man. God governs man by mechanical laws, by chemical laws, by vital laws, and he governs him by civil laws. He who leaps from a precipice or drinks a glass of poison and dies, dies under a law of God, which *executes itself*. He who murders his brother and dies on the gallows, dies under a law of God, which is *executed by the hand* of the civil magistrate, the minister of God. In all these cases death is a penalty inflicted by God for a violation of a rule of his government, physical or moral.

26. If this be a just view of the subject, civil government is a great *moral* institute, not a mere expedient of human wisdom and sagacity for the prevention of evil. It is this low, wretched, utilitarian view which has contributed its full share to the crimes and miseries of this country, in which the criminal law was fast becoming as pure an affair of expediency as the civil. But the government of God, as Creator, is a government of *justice*, and crime is punished for its *ill-desert*; and the civil magistrate who is the minister of God (Romans 13), while he has no right, from any view of expediency, to inflict any punishment which justice does not sanction, is bound to inflict the punishment which justice requires and crime deserves. This remark is needed for the sake of one important inference, and that is that every civil government on earth is bound explicitly to recognize its responsibility to God as the moral governor of mankind. It is perfectly monstrous that the power which bears the sword and exercises the awful prerogative of taking human life, either in peace or war,



should not acknowledge itself to be the servant of the sovereign Lord of life and death; that the power which represents the majesty of justice, should not recognize its responsibility to him who is the eternal foundation and standard of all righteousness. So much for civil government as the ordinance of God. It regards man as man, and, therefore, regards *all* men.

27. The church, on the other hand, is the ordinance of God, considered as the Saviour of men in the person of Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son. It contemplates man, not simply as man, nor as upright in his original condition of innocence, nor simply as a fallen creature, but as "the prisoner of hope," or more strictly still, as "the heir of salvation," really or by credible profession. It, therefore, does not contemplate all men, but only those who enjoy a dispensation of grace, or more strictly (as to its government) those who profess and call themselves Christians.

28. We note again (*b*), that the State considers man only as to his *outward* being. It protects the citizen or the subject in his person, his property, his liberty, by punishing illegal assaults upon either. Its punishments affect the body and outward condition of the transgressor. It compels obedience and punishes disobedience by brute force. This is the sanction of its law. Its symbol is the sword. It can have nothing to do, therefore, with the faith of its subjects; for faith lies in the domain of the Spirit, and cannot be compelled. The State does not and cannot aim at holiness, it aims only at social order. It has nothing to do with the religion of the citizen, or the loyalty of the heart, but only with his obedience to the laws, affecting the body and the outward estate. It cannot require the citizen to approve and love the laws, but only not to violate them.

29. The church, on the other hand, moves in the sphere of the spirit. It has nothing to do with the bodies, the estates, the outward condition of mankind. Its sanctions are not corporeal, involving the exercise of brute force, but only moral and spiritual, appealing to the judgment, the faith, the conscience of its members. It knows nothing of the sword, the dungeon, the lash, pecuniary fines, &c., &c., but only of argument, exhortation, admonition, censure, &c., &c. Its great function is to teach, to



convince, to persuade, "to bear witness of the truth." Its triumphs are the triumphs of *love*, it drags no reluctant captives at the wheels of its chariot; the design of its ordinances, oracles, ministry, is through the efficacious operation of the Holy Ghost to bring its captives into hearty sympathy with its king, and so to give them a share in the glory and exultation of the triumphs of the king. Its symbol is the "keys" by which it opens and shuts the kingdom of heaven, according as men are believers or impenitent. Its only sword is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Its discipline is not the discipline of an avenging judge, asserting the unbending majesty of the law, but the discipline of a tender mother, whose bowels yearn over the wayward child, and who inflicts no pain, except for the child's reformation and salvation. The authority of his kingdom is spiritual. His sword is a sword "coming out of his *mouth*." His voice, is "Son, give me thy *heart*;" "Repent, for the kingdom heaven is at hand," and by the power of his Spirit, he sweetly constrains those whom he chooses for members of his kingdom to call him "Lord." He makes them *willing* in the day of his power. They who are his, or profess to be his, have, or make a credible profession of having, the great law of love written upon their hearts, and, therefore, need more the directing than the restraining power of the law. The whole discipline of the church is based upon the supposition of faith in its members, so that what is of no account in the eye of the State, is primary and fundamental in the eye of the church. It is so perfectly obvious, that the employment of force is abhorrent, from the whole nature and genius of the church, that even the fiends of the "holy office" were compelled to profess the greatest horror of shedding the blood of heretics, and piously turned them over to the secular arm. The Inquisition was always, in theory at least, what every court of the church is, a "penitentiary tribunal," a tribunal whose function is not punishment, but discipline, not the destruction, but the edification of the offender, brought about through his personal repentance.

30. *Third.* The state and the church differ in the rule by which they are respectively guided in the exercise of power. The constitution of the church is a divine revelation; the constitution



of Bible as Natural - Supernatural. Natural - civil - recognizing relations already existing. Supernatural creates new relations.

of the State must be determined by human reason and the course of providential events. (Assembly of '61.) The Bible is the statute-book of the church, the visible kingdom of Christ; the light of nature is the guide of the State. The church has no legislative power, properly so-called, but only a power to declare and obey the law of Christ's kingdom. The church is only a witness, and she cannot go beyond the divine testimony of the Word; she had no commission to open her lips, but with a "Thus saith the Lord." All her acts of government are acts of obedience to Christ, her only king. As a church, she owes no allegiance to any authority but that of Christ; as his bride, she owes no loyalty to any person but him. Her members, as citizens or subjects, owe allegiance to the civil power, and are subject to it in their bodies and estates; but as Christians, they know no authority but Christ's; and if the church itself should enact laws against her divine constitution, her members must appeal from her to Christ, the king. The State may adopt any form of government it pleases—its power is magisterial and imperative. The power of the church being only ministerial and declarative," she must adopt the form of government whose regulative and constitutive principles are revealed in the Scriptures, her constitution and charter. The life of the State is natural, and it is left to create an organization for itself. The life of the church is supernatural, and God prescribes an organization for it.

31. When we say that the Bible is not the rule for the State, we do not mean that the State is at liberty to disregard its teachings. We mean to affirm that God has given no commission to the State to testify to the truth of Christ's revelation, or to interpret it. It is to the church that the lively oracles have been committed by her divine head. The church alone is founded upon the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. The church alone is the pillar and ground of the truth. She is the woman, clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. She is the system of candle-sticks, in the midst of which the king of the kingdom walks, and in his hand alone are the stars, the teachers and rulers of the church. Christ is the *lumen illuminans*, the church is the *lumen illuminatum*. It is the kingdom of



the Son of Man, and not the kingdom of the leviathan of the State, which is the light of the world. This is the case under the present dispensation, whatever may be the case when kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. Hence the change which has been proposed from time to time, in the constitution of the United States, so as to make that instrument acknowledge the divine authority of the Scriptures and the kingly office of Christ, proceeds upon a totally false conception of the sphere and functions of the State. As the State is the ordinance of God, as creator and moral governor, and is designed for man as man, it has nothing to do with any principles of religion but those which belong to man as man: to wit, the being of God and a moral government. To give it any power over the truths of revealed religion, and over the records which contain those truths, is to confound it with the church, or what is practically the same thing, to abolish the church, except as an auxiliary of the State, in preserving order. It becomes then, what infidel philosophers have represented it to be, a mere temporary "crutch."

32. The definition of the church visible in our confession (c. 25, 5, 2,) makes it to consist of those "who profess the true religion, together with their children." Now, if the proposed change in the constitution of the United States were made, the State would answer to this definition. It would profess the "true religion." If it should be said again, that it is but a single doctrine, which the State proposes, we answer again, (*a*) that it is a confession fully as comprehensive as that which the church itself made for centuries under its patriarchal form; (*b*) that in itself it includes the whole plan of salvation; for Christ's kingly office is based upon his priestly. It is certainly no narrower than the confession in Acts 8: 37, and I Corinthians 12: 3. It is the very substance of the teaching of the whole gospel history, specially of the first three gospels. The burden of this history is the "kingdom of heaven" and the "Son of Man," the king. (*c*) That the principle upon which the advocates of this amendment proceed, does not hinder the State from enlarging its confession at any time, or from finally enlarging it to the dimensions of the Westminster standards. Upon the whole, then, it appears that



these brethren would logically confound church and state, by making the same definition answer to both; and really confound them by making the state and church both witnesses of Christ.

33. The only safety for liberty and religion is in rigidly enforcing the maxim that the Bible is the *positive* rule for the church, a *negative* rule for the State. The State may do whatever the Bible does not *forbid*. The church may do only what the Bible directs or permits; and where the Bible is silent, the church must be silent. Whatever the Bible does not grant is *eo-ipso*, to the church prohibited. This distinction is almost certain to be overlooked when civil and ecclesiastical functions are mingled, as in England in the days of Hooker and Cartwright—Hooker and the court party contending that matters not expressly prohibited in the Scriptures, were matters of lawful legislation on the part of the church. This approval of the principle, that whatever is not forbidden is lawful, was natural enough to these men, because the church had been subject, and continued to be subject, to the civil power; and the principle is justly applicable to the State. Cartwright and the Puritans contending, on the other hand, that the principle was false, in its application to the church; that the Bible was the *constitution* and *charter* of the church, and consequently that silence was prohibition, or, in other words, that all additions to the things in the Bible, if not contrary to any particular command, were contrary to the general command, that “nothing be added.” So also in the United States, when the church, forgetting her exclusive relation to Christ, committed fornication with the civil power, and abdicated her high dignity and glory as the free-woman, voluntarily enslaved herself to the State. We find the church, on the one hand, leaving her testimony and prescribing terms of communion not revealed in the Scriptures; and the State, on the other hand, transcending its sphere and usurping the privileges of the church and of Christ. The State, and even a party in the State, dictates (virtually at least) the testimony of the church; and the church (or its doctors) insist that the State also shall testify for a doctrine, which she herself had practically denied, the royal authority and headship of Christ. How remorseless is that unconscious logic which governs men who have forsaken, or who are ignorant



General Assembly at Newark N. J. actually ran up a United States flag over the church where they were sitting. A court of Jesus Christ hoisted the Ensign of Caesar.

of, a conscious logic. The church *feels* that there is no great difference between her and the State, and therefore, on the one hand, acts upon the rule, that whatever is not prohibited is lawful; and, on the other hand, insists that the State shall adopt her lip-service, and confess that Jesus is the king. She feels that Christ is no more her king than he is the State's king, and therefore the confession and the legislation ought to be the same in both. How else can we account for the remarkable fact, that in the very midst of all the shameful subserviency of the church to the civil power, and its superserviceable zeal on behalf of the government in the midst of its apostacy from true allegiance to Christ, it should insist upon the State amending its constitution, so as to confess Christ to be king. True, a like proposition was made in the Southern church, and in the midst of great political excitement, when the State loomed out in proportions vast enough to fill nearly the whole field of vision. But it has been buried effectually, and that, too, because deemed inconsistent with the Scriptural doctrine of church and state.

34. This view of the relation of the Scriptures and of the truth they reveal to church and state, respectively, is, we think, clearly taught in John 18: 36, 37. Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews, but now is my kingdom not from hence." Pilate, therefore, said unto him, "Art thou a king, then?" Jesus answered, "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." 1. Jesus teaches us that his kingdom is not of this world, either as to its origin or its nature. 2. That it is not, therefore, a kingdom of *force*, but of persuasion, founded upon the conviction of the truth. Its great glory is *internal*, the possession of the truth; its great external feature is "bearing witness to the truth." The truth is the means by which this kingdom is established and extended, and the only subjects it recognizes are those who are "of the truth," and all *such* are its subjects. 3. That this opposition between his kingdom and the kingdom of this world (which Pilate represented), should last



during the dispensation of the calling of a people out from among the Gentiles. "Now is my kingdom not from hence." Now, if a commission has been given to civil governments to profess the truth of Christ, how could Christ say that his kingdom differed from the kingdoms of the world in this very respect? The ideas of "the truth" and "the sword" are set over against each other. A kingdom of force is not a kingdom of truth, and *vice versa*. This is the very point of the contrast between the two kingdoms, as Christ presents it. And the question of Pilate, "What is truth?" taken in connection with the following declaration to the Jews, "I find no fault in him," shows that he understood this much, that Christ's kingdom was a totally different thing from that of Cæsar. He understood the difference better than many Christian kings, and even Christian churches have understood it, in later times. Bearing witness to the truth, therefore, is the function of Christ's kingdom, not the function of the kingdom of this world. It may do very well for a Saracen to talk of propagating the truth by the sword, but it is a shame for a Christian to think of *force* in connection with the *truth*. Only they who are "born of the truth" and "of the Spirit of the truth," can "obey the truth," and "hear the king's voice." The sword has often silenced, but never convinced men.

35. The idea of a Christian nation, which is associated with this amendment of the constitution, is, as has been already suggested, a false and impracticable idea, during the present condition of trial, testimony and conflict. The Jews were a "*peculiar*" people in this respect, and were, therein, a type of the Christian church. The conception of the State, which prophecy generally gives us, is that of an organism operating by brute force, and it is generally represented in an attitude of opposition to the church of Christ. Hence we find those civil governments which have undertaken to "bear witness to the truth," have usually denied the truth and persecuted its professors. And even where civil governments make no such pretensions, their policy, both domestic and foreign, demonstrates that they are "of the earth, earthy," "kingdoms of this world," and not of the Lord and of his Christ. We must wait for the sounding of the seventh trumpet, in order to see a Christian nation or a Christian government.



Till then civil government will be, in the main, what Hobbes, its worshipper, represents it, a leviathan.

36. It may not be amiss to add a word or two more upon the use which may be legitimately made of the Scriptures by the State. 1. In the *first* place, the light of nature and reason, which is the guide of the State, is made clear by the revealed will of God. The true statesman will seek light from every possible quarter. As he will enlarge his views by the study of the political writings of Plato, Aristotle and Cicero, and by the study of the great historians of Greece and Rome, as well as of those of modern States, so he will not neglect the laws of Moses nor the striking biblical histories in which the operation of those laws is exemplified. And upon many points of civil regulation, he will find that the Bible sustains the conclusions of reason and experience. For example, in respect to the justice and expediency of capital punishment for the crime of murder, the Bible not only gives its sanction to this penalty, but makes it the duty of the civil magistrate, as the sword-bearer, to inflict it. It represents the land in which murder is not thus punished, as "polluted with blood," and thereby provoking the judgment of heaven. So also as to the lawfulness of war, and of the profession of a soldier. The sword-bearer is bound to wage defensive war; to punish the invader, and to protect the lives and property of the people, upon the same principle upon which he punishes the individual murderer. According to the light of nature, interpreted by the Scriptures, the Quaker theory of war is not merely a sickly sentimentalism, but a rebellion against the organized law of society and government. The law of marriage is another example. The Bible gives us, in the account of the creation of man, as male and female (one man and one woman, the one sex as the complement of the other), the true idea which should govern all civil legislation concerning this relation. It shows the inexpediency of polygamy. In assuming further, a community of life between the husband and the wife, it makes the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes a *monstrous* crime against nature, and so confirms a physiological law, which has been established by observation and experience. It settles, also, the question of independent, marital rights,



as State a right to prohibit ministers from pub. office  
Edward Robinson Memorial holds that the State has no  
right to legislate about them one way or another. -  
by no means holding that it is proper for a minister  
to be 94 civil officer. Ecclesiology.

37. In the *second* place, the Bible rectifies the teachings of the light of nature. In the case of a weekly rest, for example, it teaches that such a rest, like the institution of marriage, belongs to man as man, was ordained before his fall, and is necessary to his well being. Reason and experience have amply demonstrated the same truth, that the "Sabbath was made for man;" but it is doubtful whether the fact would have been been recognized by the light of nature alone; and Christian governments, so-called, habitually violate reason and experience in their legislation concerning a weekly rest. The French, at the close of the last century, abolished it altogether, and with what results all the world knows.

38. In the *third* place, every man who has received this revelation, is bound to accept it as a revelation from God, and to regulate his faith and practice by its authority, either in a positive or negative way. Touching the whole matter of the method of salvation, the whole question as to what is necessary to be believed or done, and *all* that is necessary to be believed or done, in order to salvation and eternal life, the Scriptures are a full, complete and *positive* guide. Touching the life that now is, the conditions necessary to sustain the being or promote the well-being of society, agriculture, commerce, manufactures, civil and criminal laws, the man, if he be a civil magistrate, or whatever else, is to be governed by the negative authority of the Bible. He can do anything which the Bible does not *forbid*.

39. It may be said that this cannot be the theory received by the church and people of this country before the war; for it had become the settled policy of the Federal government to have chaplains of Congress and chaplains of the army and navy, and of the army and navy schools; and of the State governments, as well as the Federal, to recognize the Sabbath as the law of the land; to prescribe the reading of the Bible in the public schools, &c. We answer: 1. In reference to the chaplains, that the government was bound to provide religious ordinances for those whom its service prevented from procuring them for themselves, but the choice of religious teachers ought to have been left to the men who were to be placed under their instruction; and, in respect to the chaplains of Congress, the compensation ought



other poem same as that of Ch. in 15th century, saying to  
"you shall not think at all unless you think unde-  
dictation". Humanism an earnest protest ag-  
1. Humanism learning not necessarily a curse. In  
middle ground Ecclesiology. practically if not 95 logically  
Christianity and Atheism. Good thing to train a man  
to be paid by the members themselves, not out of the govern-  
ment treasury; or, in other words, they ought to act as men or  
citizens, not as legislators—in like manner as the President of the  
United States, or the Governor of a State, can invite the people  
to observe a day of prayer or thanksgiving, only as a distin-  
guished citizen. If the chief magistrate should issue a procla-  
mation of this sort, as of authority, without the action of the  
legislative department of the government, he would be guilty of  
usurping the powers of that department; and if the legislative  
and executive departments together should ordain such a day,  
both would be guilty of usurping the powers of the church.  
2. In regard to the use of the Bible in the public schools, the  
State has no power to ordain anything about the Bible in the pub-  
lic schools, either in the way of prescribing or proscribing its use  
as the word of God. It might ordain the use of the English  
Bible as a classic of the English language, but, in my judgment,  
it would not be expedient to do so. The public schools are not  
designed to teach revealed religion, but the branches of secular  
learning. The teaching of religion must be left to the family  
and the church. 3d. In regard to the Sabbath, we have already  
alluded to one ground upon which it is recognized in civil law.  
It may be added that the State has no right to violate liberty of  
conscience; and by disregarding the Sabbath as it does in some  
of its laws (in the post-office department, for example), it does  
violate the liberty of conscience by excluding from offices those  
who regard the Sabbath as a rest divinely ordained. On the  
other hand, it is absurd to contend, as Jews and infidels contend,  
that their rights are violated by the State's prohibiting buying  
and selling on the Sabbath, unless they take the position that the  
State has no right to put any restriction whatever upon trade.  
If they take this position, they make civil government an impos-  
sibility.

40. One more question of great importance, as recent events  
have shown it to be, demands a brief notice. The respective  
jurisdictions of church and state seem to meet in the idea of  
duty. In many things, in the majority of things, this is the occa-  
sion of no difficulty. The church enjoins duty as obedience to  
God, and the State enforces it as the safe-guard of social order.



whether Caesar is your master or not, whether he en-  
at any just authority,  
case of murder the State punishes, the ch discipline  
the matter is the same in each case. The form  
different 96. The State calling Ecclesiology. it crime - the ch sin.

But there can be no collision unless the one or the other blunders  
as to the things that are naturally right. When the State makes  
wicked laws, contradicting the eternal principles of rectitude, the  
church is at liberty to testify against them, and humbly to peti-  
tion that they may be repealed. In like manner, if the church  
becomes seditious and a disturber of the peace, the State has the  
right to abate the nuisance. In ordinary cases, however, there is  
not likely to be a collision. The only serious danger is where  
moral duty is conditioned upon a political question. Under the  
pretext of inculcating duty, the church may usurp the power to  
determine the question which conditions it, and that is precisely  
what she is debarred from doing. The condition must be given.  
She must accept it from the State, and then her own course is  
clear. If Cæsar is your master, then pay tribute to him; but  
whether the "if" holds, whether he now retains it, or has for-  
feited it, these are points which the church has no commission to  
adjudicate. (Letter of Assembly of '61 to the churches through-  
out the world.) This was the view also of Dr. Hodge and  
others, who protested against the "Spring Resolutions," adopted  
by the Northern Assembly of '61. They say: "We deny the  
right of the General Assembly to decide the political question,  
to what government the allegiance of Presbyterians, as citizens,  
are due, and its right to make that decision a condition of mem-  
bership in our church." \* \* The General Assembly in this de-  
cided a political question, and in making that decision practi-  
cally a condition of membership in the church, has, in our judg-  
ment, violated the constitution of the church and usurped the pre-  
rogative of its divine Master." (See the paper quoted in Bullock's  
address, p, 10.) The Synod of Kentucky, of the same year,  
under the lead of Dr. R. J. Breckénridge and Dr. Humphrey,  
adopted a similar testimony against the action of the Assembly.  
In this they followed the example of the Master, who, though  
head over all things to the church, refused to decide the question  
of civil allegiance, or to exercise any other secular function. In  
this they followed the example of the church, for many genera-  
tions, which recognized no political questions as questions of alle-  
giance to this or that emperor. It was only after the establishment  
of the Christian religion under Constantine, that church questions



impossible to be guilty of treason to Federal Govt before  
city of treason to State Govt, because the Fed Govt has  
acquired by State Constitutions as part of their Govt a breach  
State allegiance is a breach of Federal allegiance

became complicated with questions of allegiance, and of support to this or that government.

41. It is a question, as the protestants of the Assembly of '61 (Northern) say, about which Christians may honestly differ. In this country, it is a question about the interpretation of the constitution. The Federalist ministers of the North, before the war, often exchanged views with States Rights ministers of the North and South upon this question, and no one of them thought of denouncing the States Rights theory, either as a *heresy* or as an *immorality*; nay, not a few of them, who are now foremost in denouncing us as rebels, unworthy to sit with them at the Lord's table, ~~assisted~~ and defended the right of the South to seek redress against the tyranny of a majority, and one of them went so far as to defend the right of the South to make war for her own protection. (See Breckinridge in *Presbyterian Critic*, for July '55.) Surely it is an astounding spectacle to see this church fall so suddenly, headlong, down from the very battlements of heaven, into the boiling abyss of partisan, political passion, hatred, and excess. A solemn warning to us all, "to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation."

42. The foregoing views of the relations of church and state, of the indispensable necessity of each moving in its own orbit and attending to its own concerns, have been fully vindicated by the history of this country. The church in the North became corrupt; the glory of Christ was sacrificed to the interests of Cæsar; the lovely fruits of charity perished in the storm of political prejudice and passion; the unclean spirit of the world took possession of the temple of the Holy Ghost, and the church, instead of being a sequestered and quiet retreat for the heart weary of strife and turmoil, became itself the scene of strife and turmoil. As its great type, the nation of Israel, dwelt in peace, while the surrounding nations were convulsed, so long as Israel was true to its vocation as a peculiar people and separate from the nations, but became subject to the dangers and calamities of those nations, even in a higher degree, when it formed entangling alliances with them; so also the church in this land, by renouncing her dignity and safety, as an organism entirely separate from the State, became subject to the miseries of her ally. Better, a



thousand times better, would it be for her to be wasted by the fire and sword of the beast, than to ride upon it and be carried hither and thither by it, or, in a word, to renounce her allegiance to her royal spouse and become a harlot.

#### OTHER THEORIES OF CHURCH AND STATE.

1st. That of *alliance*. The great expounder of this theory is Bishop Warburton (in his treatise entitled *Alliance between Church and State*). It is briefly, as follows (see S. P. R., vol. 3, p. 214, Oct. '49): "Church and State are, originally, both independent and sovereign societies, having different ends in view, and hence not clashing, although the same persons may be under the jurisdiction of both. The office of the State is to provide for the *temporal* interests of man. That of the church, for his *eternal* interests. The care of the one, is confined to the *body*; that of the other, is directed to the *soul*. The one looks upon offences as *crimes*, the other takes cognizance of them as *vices* and as *sins*. Now, as civil society can only restrain from open transgression, nor always from this, without opening the way to crimes still more flagitious; as it cannot enforce the duties of imperfect obligation, and further, often inflames the appetites it proposes to correct; and as religion, having the sanctions of rewards, (while civil government has only that of punishment,) exactly supplies these defects; so the church becomes necessary as a complement to the State. The state, therefore, proposes to the church a union for their mutual benefit, and this union is called an "alliance," to indicate the original sovereignty of the parties. By this alliance, the State pledges itself to endow, protect, and extend the church, and the church to lend her whole influence to the State. The reciprocal concessions are, that the church resigns her supremacy by constituting the civil ruler her supreme head, and by submitting her laws to the State's approval; and the State, in compensation, gives to the church a coactive power for the reformation of manners, and secures her a seat and representation in the national council. By this alliance the civil magistrate gets additional reverence, and the church a power which does not belong to her." In reference to this theory, it is sufficient to say: 1st.



That the church has no "sovereignty," and, therefore, could form no such "alliance." 2d. That while it is true that she supplies the deficiencies of civil government, it is also true that she does this most effectually when she is untrammelled and uncorrupted by any such *mesalliance*, as all history shows. 3d. That the "coercive" power she gets from the State, is a power which does not belong to her, a power which tends to destroy that moral and spiritual power which does belong to her, and to nullify her vocation as a witness for the truth. She must be like her Master (John 18: 36, 37). 4th. The theory is inconsistent with itself. The church and state are represented as sovereign and independent, having each a life, a sphere, an aim, &c., &c., of its own; and yet the alliance is made necessary to the life of both.

II. *The Church of Scotland Theory.*—The most illustrious defender of this theory is Dr. Chalmers, in his "Lectures on the Establishment and Extension of National Churches." This is, in sum, that the church has a right to a "legal provision for the expenses of its ministrations." The church does not, however, resign any portion of her independence. She receives from the State the maintenance of her clergy, and the clergy in return give to the subjects of the State a Christian education; but they may and do reserve to themselves the whole power and privilege of determining what that education shall be. For their food and raiment, and their sacred, or even their private edifices, they may be indebted to the State, but their creed, discipline, ritual, articles of faith, formularies, whether of doctrine or devotion," &c., &c.

Answer (1). Such an establishment is as purely utopian as Plato's republic. (2.) The history of the Church of Scotland refutes it all. (3.) No State will, or ought to, support a church without holding the church accountable for the mode in which the funds are expended. If the State pays for "education," she has a right to say what sort of education she is willing to pay for, and to enquire whether she is getting it. (4.) Then the civil magistrate must be the judge as to matters of faith, which is the principle of all the persecutions which have cursed the earth, and of which the kingdom of Scotland has had its full share. (5.) The spirituality of the church impaired. Moderatism in the kingdom

Kirk of Scotland. e.g. Dr Geo Campbell & Robertson (Chalmers) denouncing everything like spirituality & Experimental religion—practically. Protest ag the right of patronage was the



III. *Gladstone's Theory*.—"The State in its relations with the Church, by W. E. Gladstone, Esq., M. P." (See also Macaulay's review of this work in his *Miscellanies*.) The theory, in sum, is the same as that of Vattel and other old civilians, that civil government is instituted for the highest good of the whole in every concern, and is bound to do all in its power for this end in every department; that a commonwealth is a *moral person*, having judgment, responsibility, &c., &c., and is, therefore, bound as a corporate person to recognize and obey the true religion. Hence the State, as a State, must have its religion. It must profess this religion by State acts. It must have a religious test for office, because otherwise the religious character of the State would be lost; and it must use its State power to propagate this State religion. Macaulay's review showing, that upon these principles of Mr. Gladstone, every army, bank, railroad corporation would be bound to have its own religion the author, it is said, in his second edition modified his statement, so as to make moral personality, &c , &c., the attributes only of those associations which have these three characteristics, viz: (1.) That they are of divine institution. (2.) That they are perpetual. (3.) That they are universal, *i. e.*, embracing everybody. These marks are found in two natural associations of men, as well as in the supernatural society of the church, the family and the State. Now, as all admit that the family must have a religion, so also must the State, for the same reasons."

The simple answer to all this is: (1.) That it makes the State *το παν*, in the moral world, and it absorbs all other relations, both of the family and the church. A Lacedæmonian theory of the state and an Erastian annihilation of the church. (2) It contradicts plain definitions of the several spheres of the church, state and family, as laid down in the Scriptures. (3.) It is the parent of tyranny in the State, of formalism and hypocrisy in the church.

IV. *Dr. Arnold's Theory*.—"The Principles of Church Reform, the State and the Church, with other Essays, by Thomas Arnold." This theory is expressed in the following extract (see S. P. R., vol. 3, p. 227): "Where a State chooses for itself the true religion, it declares itself Christian. But by so doing it becomes



a part of Christ's holy catholic church, not allied with it, which implies distinctness from it, but transformed into it. But as for the particular portion of this church, which may have existed before within the limits of the State's sovereignty, the actual society of Christian men there subsisting, the State does not ally itself with such a society, for alliance supposes two parties equally sovereign, nor yet does it become the church as to its outward form and organization, neither does the church, on the other hand, become so lost in the State as to become, in the offensive sense of the term, secularized. The spirit of the church is transfused into a more perfect body, and its former organization dies away. The form is that of the State, the spirit is that of the church; what was the kingdom of the world has become a kingdom of Christ, a picture of the church in the high and spiritual sense of the term; but in that sense, in which church denotes the outward and social organization of Christians in any one particular place, it is no longer a Christian church, but what is far better and brighter, a Christian kingdom." Same thing, substantially, as that of the rationalists. (See Hertzog's Encyclopædia, *sub. voc.* "church.") The answer to all this is contained in the last sentence, that the church ceases to exist altogether. It is Erastianism in its boldest and extremest form. The same theory really with that of Hobbs, only Dr. Arnold's leviathan is a pious beast.

V. *The Popish Theory*.—(Ultramontane). The different stages of its development may be seen in the claims of Hildebrand (1073–1085), Innocent III (1198–1216), Boniface VIII (1294–1303). The doctrine, in brief, is that the Pope is vicar of Christ; and as Christ is the head of the church and head of all things besides, for the sake of his church, so the Pope is the visible head of the church on earth, and all civil powers are subject to his direction and power whenever the interests of the church require it, of which the Pope, and not the civil power, is the judge. The claim, in its extremest form, is contained in the Bull "*clericis laicos*," and in the message of Boniface VIII to Philip, the "Fair, King" of France (1296). *Scire te volumus quod in spiritualibus, et temporalibus nobis subes. Alind credentes, hæreticos reputamus.* And a sufficient answer to the claim is contained



in the reply of Philip: *Sciat maxina tua fatuitas, in temporalibus nos alicui non subesse. Secus credentes fatuos et dementes reputamus.* (See Kurtz's Church History, sect. 140-1.) It must be acknowledged, however, that as between Ultramontanism and Gallicanism, the former has the best of the argument from Papal premises, accepted by both. (See Thornwell on the Apocrypha, Letter 9, p. 143, for a full discussion and refutation of this abominable theory. See also, for some concessions in regard to the effect of such claims upon the causes of civil freedom, p. 44 of the memoir of Dr. Muller, prefixed to Robertson's translation of his Symbolic.) The legitimate fruits of this Ultramontanism are seen in the Albigensian Crusades and the Inquisition. No surer evidence is needed to prove that the liar-murderer was the author of the theory. (See Gillespie's Assertion of the Government of the Church of Scotland. Part II, c. 1. See on the Gallican Liberties, Gregorie—French Papal Bishop—*Les Liberties de l'Eglise Gallicane*.)

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\* By way of addendum, attention may be called to the three theories held in the Lutheran church:

1. The "Episcopal system," originated by Constantine the Great, in which the chief magistrate is head of the church (*circa sacra*), in virtue of his being the *præcipuum membrum ecclesiæ*.
2. The system of "territorial jurisdiction" (*cujus regio, ejus religio*), according to which the chief magistrate is regarded as the head of the church, not as its chief member, but as the "father of his people," and bound to look after all their interests. (Compare Vattel and Puffendorf, and Gladstone, as above.)
3. The "collegiate system," according to which the three estates, which constitute the *ecclesia synthetica*, (to wit: "Economic," "political," and "ecclesiastical,") are all represented, differs from the first (the Episcopal system) in that it gives much greater prominence to the people (*status economicus*), while the "Episcopal" does not go behind the ministers (the *stat. ecclesiasticus*). It made the power to reside in all the three estates, but primarily in the *status economicus*, which could transfer its authority to the civil ruler. It was called the "collegiate" system, because it made the "*jura in sacris*" (doctrine, worship, appointment to ministry, &c.) *jura collegialia* (collective rights.) See Kurtz's Church History, vol. 2, pp. 246-7. Hare's Dogmatic Evangel. (Protestant), p. 438, and Quenstedt, as quoted there.



imagines a singer in potentia if he has the capability of learning to sing though he may never learn. After learning he is a singer in actu primo when sleeping, eating &c. a singer in actu secundo when singing.  
"in *potens actus*" - becomes possessing always every possible function.  
Ecclesiology.

SUBJECT OF CHURCH POWER—*Materia in qua.*

See Confession of Faith, chapter xxx, sec. 1. All church power (of which Christ, the head, is, as we have seen, the only source) is in *secundo actu*, in the officers; in *primo actu*, in the whole body. The life of the church is one; officers are but the organs through which it is manifested in acts of jurisdiction and instruction, and the acts of all officers, in consequence of this organic relation, are the acts of the church. They are the *principium quo*; she is the *principium quod*. The power resides in her; it is exercised by them. Ministers are her mouth as elders are her hands. Both equally represent her, and both are nothing, except as they represent her. All lawful acts of all lawful officers, are acts of the church, and they who hear the preacher or the presbytery, hear the church. The case is analogous to the motions of the human body. Vital power is not in the hands or the feet, it is in the whole body. But the exercise of that power in walking, or in writing, is confined to particular organs. The power is one but its functions are manifold, and it has an organ appropriate to every function. This makes it an organic whole. So the church has functions; these functions require appropriate organs; these organs are created by Christ, and the church becomes an organic whole." (S. P. R. Jan'y '61, p. 787-8.) This theory is opposed to the popish and prelatic assumption that the power resides in the clergy, and is transmitted in a certain line of succession. The history of the very terms "clergy and laity" is the history of the growth of this grievous error in regard to the subject of church power. The terms are derived from two Greek words, *κληρος*, lot or inheritance, and *λαος*, people. When it became fashionable for the pastors of the church to widen the distance between their own order and the condition of their Christian brethren, the Christian commonwealth was by them divided into clergy and laity; the former term was appropriated to themselves as selected and contradistinguished from the multitude, as being in the present world by way of eminence God's peculiar or "special inheritance." (See Campbell's Lect. on Eccle. History 9, p. 151.) This usage was derived, as was pretended,



from the Old Testament, in which the tribe of Levi was called the inheritance of the Lord. But it so happens that the tribe of Levi is never called the inheritance of the Lord, as distinguished from the people, but only as a part included in the whole.—Moses, himself a Levite, says in an address to God (Deut. 9: 29), “They (i. e. the whole nation,) are thy people (*λαος*), and thine inheritance (*κληρος*).” In the LXX version of this passage, the same persons are in the same sentence declared to be both *λ* and *κ*. In the New Testament the term *κ* is applied to persons but in one passage (1 Pet. 5: 3), and in that the term is applied not to the shepherds, but to the flock: in opposition to the pastors. The Lord is said to be the inheritance of Levi (because that tribe had no landed possessions, but lived by the temple), but not *vice versa*. Strange the confusion about so simple a matter. Clemens Romanus, indeed, uses the term “*λαικοι*” to distinguish the mass of the Jews from the Levites (including the priests); and on this account, the use of the terms “clergy and laity” is thought to be as old as his day. But as Dr. Campbell observes (loc. sup. cit.), he is speaking of the *Jewish priesthood*, not of the *Christian ministry*; and he does not use it in opposition to any one general term, such as *clericoi*, but, after mentioning three different orders, he uses the term *laico*, to include under one comprehensive name all that were not specially comprised under any of the former—corresponding to the application sometimes made of the Latin word *popularis* (e. g. a citizen, one that is not a soldier). In this view it might be contrasted with men in office of any kind whatever; thus in civil government with “rulers,” to distinguish the people from the magistrates: in an army with “generals”—the soldiers from the commander. In this sense like *idiotes*. (See Horsley’s Tracts against Priestly; Alexander on Acts 4: 13.) Even in its application to the Levitical priesthood, Clemens (as Dr. C. maintains) does not use it so as to imply that it was in itself exclusive of that priesthood and of the tribe of Levi. They are indeed excluded, because separately named, but not from the import of the word. Take an example from the New Testament (Acts 15: 22): “Apostles and elders with the whole church.” Here are three orders plainly mentioned and distinguished (compare the phrase, the law, the prophets and the



scriptures; see Alexander's Isaiah, p. xi: 8), the apostles or extraordinary ministers, the elders or fixed pastors, and the church or Christian people. But does this imply that the name church does not properly comprehend the pastors as well as people? By no means. They are not, indeed, in this passage comprised under the term, not because it does not extend so far (which is not the fact), but because they are separately named. The import of the expression is no more than this: the apostles and elders, with all the Christian brethren, who come not under either of these denominations. So also I P. 5, the presbyters are opposed to the *cleroi*, not as though the former constituted no part of God's heritage or clergy; they only do not constitute that part of which they are here commanded to take the charge. So Clemens' *laicoi* is "all the Jewish people." 3

I have said that the history of these words, is the history of the grievous error of popery and prelacy, which lodges church power in the ministry or clergy. The distinction of clergy and laity took its rise in the church about the same time with the rise of the doctrine of a sacerdotal character in the ministry. Churches became temples, ministers priests, and worship, sacrifice. Now, under the law, the priesthood was a separate caste. The succession depending not upon election by the people, but upon birth; and so also with the Levitical ministry in general. It was all a matter of birth. Consequently, although the whole nation of the Jews was called a "kingdom of priests," in a figurative sense, yet the power of the priesthood was not in the people, but in the family of Aaron alone. Hence the terrible judgment upon Korah and his followers. When, therefore, the sacerdotal theory of the ministry began to prevail, and the Levitical priesthood was considered the type of the Christian ministry, it was inevitable that the ministry should become a *caste*; and the people become a flock of sheep only to be fleeced. Hence the privileges of the people began to be abridged, in the matter of electing their own church officers, until the settled doctrine of the church of Rome was thus expressed in the words of Bellarmine, (See Clericis, c. vii, cited by Cunningham; see S. P. R., January 1861, p. 786.) "The election of pastors pertains to the government of the church. The people, therefore, ought not to



elect their pastors. So long as they had the power of election it might appear as if the people was the body in which the vital force resided, and that the officers were merely the mouth, or hands, or feet.

The same leaven of prelacy is manifested in the use of the terms "clergy and laity" by some in our own church. (See S. P. R. *ut sup. cit.*) Important, therefore, to point out in what sense these terms may be used in harmony with the doctrine that all church power is, as to its *being*, in the whole church. (See S. P. R., Jan. '61, p. 792.) Clergy and laity are terms which in the New Testament are indiscriminately applied to all the *people* of God. About this there can be no question. In the New Testament sense, therefore, every minister is a layman and every layman is a clergyman. In the common Protestant sense, the origin of which it is useless to trace (it is given above from Campbell), the terms express the distinction between the office-bearers of the church and the people in their private capacity. A clergyman is a man clothed with the office of a presbyter. Now an office in a free government is not a *rank* or a *caste*. It is not an estate of the realm. It is simply a public trust. A man, therefore, does not cease to belong to the people by being chosen to office. The President of the United States is still one of the people. The representatives in Congress are still among the people. Our judges and senators are still a part of the people. Office makes a distinction in relations—the distinction between a private and a public man, but makes no distinction in person or in rank. Office-bearers are not an order in the legal sense. \* \* \* To convey the idea that the distinctions induced by ordination are official, and not personal, our standards have studiously avoided the word clergy, which had been so much abused in the papacy, and substituted the more correct expressions, offices and office-bearers. See Acts 20: 28, where bishops are said to be "in the flock" (a part of the flock), not over it as in our version. (Alexander.) Power then is *in primo actu*, in the church as a body, an organic whole; the people and the rulers are the organ of election. The officers elected are the organs by which the functions of teaching, government, and distribution of revenues are exercised. And as the organs are, in a truer sense, given to the body,



than the body to the organs, so it is more proper to say that the ministry is given to the church than the church to the ministry. The former is Paul's mode of stating the case (Eph. 4, Cor. 12, Rom. 12); the latter is the mode of the Prelatists.

II. Power *in actu secundo*, or as to its exercise, is in the officers of the church. This is opposed to the Congregational theory of church power, which makes it to reside in the people, both in *actu primo* and in *actu secundo*. When I say the Congregational theory, I do not mean that it was the accepted theory of the English Independents as a body, for John Owen held the true doctrine upon this point, as you may see by referring to his "True Nature of a Gospel Church." So far as a particular church is concerned, he was a Presbyterian; but he was an Independent in denying that the church visible was one in any such sense as to warrant classical, synodical, or general assemblies. The Congregational theory to which I refer, was defended by John Robinson, a portion of whose congregation in Holland, constituted the colony of the Mayflower in 1620. He was opposed, and his theory refuted, by the famous Samuel Rutherford, in a treatise entitled "The due Right of Presbyteries," &c., London, 1644. The theory is called by Rutherford, "The way of our New England Brethren," and we may call it, therefore, the "New England Congregational theory." It is briefly this: that all power resides in church members, in the brotherhood, and that they delegate this power to those whom they elect to bear office; these office-bearers being deputies or proxies of the people, and doing only in the matter of government what the people themselves might, of right, do; or, as it is given by Rutherford (I suppose from Robinson), "The church which Christ, in his gospel, hath instituted, and to which he hath committed the keys of his kingdom; the power of binding and losing the tables and seals of the covenant; the offices and censures of his church; the administration of all his public worship and ordinances, is a company of believers meeting in one place, every Lord's day, for the administration of the holy ordinances of God to public edification." (Right of Presbyteries, c. 1, s. 1, prop. 1.) In answer to this, Rutherford contends that "the keys," the power of binding and losing, are not given to a



company of believers, considered as an <sup>unorganized</sup> organized assembly, but to the organized church, an assembly under officers of their own choice; and that this organized body is the "subject" of ecclesiastical power in *actu primo*, and that the presbyters are the "subject" of the power of government in *actu secundo*, or, as our Confession of Faith (xxx, 1) expresses it, the Lord Jesus is king and head of his church; and hath therein *appointed a government in the hands of church officers*, distinct from the civil magistrate. The rulers of the church, therefore, although the representatives of the people, are not their deputies or proxies; are not responsible to them, though elected by them; but are responsible to Jesus Christ, who has ordained the constitution of the church, created these offices and defined their functions. The difference between the Presbyterian and the New England Congregational theories, may be illustrated by the difference between the true theory of our civil constitution, and the false, though popular, theory of it. Our civil government is a representative republic. The source of all political power is the people, who ordain and establish a constitution, a fundamental law, by which the exercise of the various departments of government is given to certain officers, or bodies of officers, legislative, judicial and executive, chosen or appointed in a certain way prescribed by the people in the constitution. Now all these officers, whether in this department or in that, whether acting singly or jointly, represent the people, because they were chosen by the people, directly or indirectly. But they are, when chosen or appointed in a constitutional manner, not responsible to the people, but to the law. The representatives in the legislature, and the executive, and all other officers chosen by the popular vote, are responsible, not to their constituents, but to the constitution—"that is to say, not to the people who elected them, but to the people (sovereign) whose will is expressed in the constitution." So that, as Burke said to the electors of Bristol, he had done, the representative is often compelled to maintain the *interests* of his constituents against their *wishes*.

The popular theory on the other hand is, that the will of the people, through the ballot-box, is the law, *i. e.*, that our government is a democracy like that of ancient Greece, with this difference,



that while in the old democracies the people assembled *en masse*, in ours they assemble by proxies or deputies. So in the church, Presbyterians hold that the rulers are representatives, deriving their authority, when once chosen to office by the people, not from the people, but from Jesus Christ, who ordained and established the constitution; that the people have no share in the government, but only the right of choosing their governors. While the New England theory is that the people govern themselves, are themselves rulers, either *en masse*, or by proxies or deputies. The error upon which the New England theory is founded, is that contained in the sentence already quoted from Bellarmine, that the election of pastors is a function pertaining to the government of the church. Bellarmine, as we have seen, draws from this principle the conclusion that the people have no right to elect their pastors. The Independents in the Westminster Assembly, on the other hand, accepting the principle, drew the conclusion that the people have *some* share in the government of the church, and consequently that the Presbyterian doctrine, which excludes them altogether from government, must be false. The true way of meeting both extremes, Papists and Independents, is by denying the principle and asserting with Ames, in his answer to Bellarmine: "*Electio quamvis*," &c. "Although election pertains to the constituting of government, it is, nevertheless, not an act of government." Dr. Hodge holds the same erroneous view, laying it down among the fundamental principles of Presbyterianism, that the people "have a right to a substantive part in the government of the church." (See discourse on Presbyterianism, published by Board of Publication, Princeton Review, July number, p. 547, S. P. R., January, 1861, p. 784.) Hence he makes the ruling elder a mere expedient, by which the people appear in church courts; and the people appear, not as the church, considered as a whole, but as a separate class or party, opposed to the clergy; hence, again the ruling elder is not a representative, but a deputy, a mere factor of the people. (S. P. R., p. 789.) More will be said on this subject when we come to consider the meaning of the term presbyter, as an official designation, and the nature of Presbyterian government, as representative.



It accurately true that Presbyter gave our branch of the church its name, for all officers have presbyters. The name comes from "Presbytery" - a court - the government by presbytery.

## OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH.

I. Officers in the apostolic church were of two kinds, extraordinary and ordinary. See Eph. 4: 11; I Cor. 11: 28, and compare, for the grounds upon which the extraordinary are defined to be temporary, I Cor. 13: 10, &c., with Warburton's exposition of the passage in his "Doctrine of Grace." We shall consider the ordinary officers first, as those in which we have a practical concern in the administration of the affairs of the church. (See Form of Government.)

1. Bishops or pastors and elders. I put these together because they are all designated in the New Testament by a common term, *presbyters*, the term which gives denomination to our own branch of the church of Christ. Our book uses the terms in the popular acceptance, "bishops or pastors," denoting the presbyters who "labor in the word and doctrine;" "ruling elders" denoting the presbyters who rule only. In the New Testament all these terms are used interchangeably. Take one example in which they all occur (or their equivalents) Acts 20: 17—28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you ("presbyters" v. 17,) overseers (episcopous), to feed (perform the office of a *shepherd* or *pastor*) the church of God," &c. "Presbyter" is the title of honor or respect, "bishop" the name designating the function, "pastor" the poetical name, and expressive chiefly of affection.

There are three leading opinions as to the use of the term "presbyter" in the New Testament. *First*. That it denotes an officer inferior in order to the "bishop," and differing in function. *Second*. That it denotes a preacher of the word, and cannot be applied to a ruling elder. *Third*. That it means a "chosen ruler," and that while it is used to denote pastors or ministers of the word, it is not so used because pastors are ministers of the word, but because they are rulers; the shepherd having two staves, the one Beauty, the other Bands (Zech. 11: 17), he is called presbyter on account of his staff Bands, his power and rule, and not on account of his staff Beauty, his power of teaching.



*prelatic*

The first of these opinions is that of the ~~prelacy~~, the second is that of the Congregationalists generally, and of some leading men in our own church (Hodge, Smythe, of Charleston, &c.), the third is that of our standards and of the strict constructionists or *jure divino* men in our own church. Instead of considering each of these opinions separately, I shall establish the last as the true view of the term, and in so doing of course the other two will be overthrown. See a very clear, full, neat presentation of the evidence from our book and from Scripture on this point in S. P. R., vol. II, June, 1848, pp. 58-67. Read Thornwell's Collected Writings, vol. 4, pp. 104-114: "That presbyter as a title of office, &c." See Owen's True Nature of Gospel Church, ch. 7, (works) vol. 20, pp. 472, *et ff.*; Rutherford's Right of Presbyters, pp. 141, &c.; Miller Ruling Elders.

The classic place of the New Testament in proof that the term presbyter is not descriptive of a preacher as such, is 1 Timothy 5: 17. The obvious meaning of these words, that which would suggest itself to any unbiased reader, is, that there are two sorts of presbyters, one sort ruling only, the other laboring in the word and doctrine as well as ruling. The term "presbyter," therefore, is applied to an officer in the Christian church who does not "labor in the word and doctrine;" and if so, the word cannot designate the function of preaching, and cannot be applied to preachers only. When applied to a preacher it must be on account of some function other than preaching, which he performs, and this function is explained to be that of ruling. The general sense of the term, therefore, is a ruler. It follows from this statement: 1. That it is a false induction to collect together a bundle of passages in which presbyters are mentioned, who were unquestionably preachers, and then without pausing to inquire whether there may not be "negative instances" (as Bacon calls them), or whether the real ground has been discovered of the application of the term, to lay it down as an axiom that the scriptural presbyter is a minister of the word. "The negative instance is the most powerful." Compare reasoning of Baptists about *baptizo*.

To produce a thousand texts in which the words presbyter and preacher appeared to be interchangeable would signify nothing,



if a single case could be alleged in which they were evidently of different import. In such a contingency, the dictate of sound philosophy and sober criticism would be to inquire whether there were not some property common to both terms, in consequence of which the affirmative and negative instances might be fairly harmonized. A definition should be sought embracing the points in which those who were and those who were not preachers, agreed.

This definition would include all that is essential to the meaning of the title, and would set forth the precise ground on which it is attributed to either class. Now this common property, the essence of the presbyterate, is given in the passage in Timothy. It is the function of ruling. To affirm in the face of this scripture that all elders are teachers, is no less absurd than to affirm in the face of experience, that all that are mortal are men.

2. It follows that the objection which is taken from the use of the word *deacon* has no force. The objection is thus stated: "As the Greek word for *deacon* is used in a general sense for all church officers, and yet is the specific title of one particular class of officers; so the word *presbyter* may be taken in a wide sense, including even apostles, and is yet the definite title of ordinary ministers of the word and is never applied in its specific sense and without qualification to any who are not ministers;" *i. e.* *presbyter* from being a generic term, susceptible originally of a larger extension, became eventually the definite title of a particular class. It is a universal law of classification, that what logicians call the whole comprehension of the *genus*, or every idea which enters into a just definition of the name of a class, must be found in *all* the species which are included under it. This is the only ground on which the *genus* can be predicated of the subordinate classes. Hence, if the word *presbyter* is generic, and in its full comprehension capable of being affirmed of other classes of men, besides ministers of the gospel, the idea of preaching cannot enter as an element into a definition of the *genus*. The specific differences which distinguish the various classes under a common name, cannot be included in the definition of that name. If preachers, accordingly, constitute a species of the *genus* *presbyter*, and some who are not preachers consti-



tute another, it is intuitively obvious that the comprehension of the generic term excludes the property of preaching. The specific difference of the classes consists in the possession in the one case and the absence in the other, of lawful authority to preach. Hence the authority to preach could not be the ground of the term presbyter being applied to preachers in a restricted sense (even if such restricted sense existed), but some property belonging to the comprehension of the *genus*. And this, for all that appears to the contrary, may be the function of ruling. Illustrate by "deacon," and show how this example makes for us. S. P. R., vol. 2., p. 62. The history of the term elder, or presbyter, or *zaken*, shows that its primary and common meaning is that of "ruler" and not "teacher." It has reference primarily to superiority in years. Now the earliest form of government being the patriarchal, the patriarch or elder being the governor, nothing was more natural than that elder should come to mean governor when used of official station; afterward, such terms came to be used in all languages as terms of respect or reverence, since respect belongs both to age and office—senior *signore*, *seigneur*, sire (lord and father), *sieur*, *monsieur*, senator, *seigneur*, alderman. First age; then authority; then respect—this seems to be the history of the word. So also the terms pastor and bishop, which we have seen to be used interchangeably with elder, properly denote government not teaching.

Pastor, or shepherd, in the Old Testament, is generally used in this sense, and where it is used of a teacher, the ground of such application is probably the tendency of teaching to regulate the life. In our version, this usage does not always appear, because the expression to "feed" is very often used to represent the word for performing the office of a shepherd. But in the following passages there can be no doubt of the meaning of the term: Ezekiel 37: 24, where shepherd and king are used as synonymous; Ezek. 34: 23, 24, where shepherd and prince are the same; 1 Chron. 11: 2.

So in the New Testament, Rev. 2: 27, "ruling" with a rod of iron, is "shepherding" with a rod of iron; Matt. 2: 6, the governor shall shepherd my people Israel: and in Eph. 4: 11, if pastors are not rulers, there is no mention made of rulers at all.



In the classic Greek writers, reference may be made to Homer, in whom "shepherd" is constantly used for "king."

*Bishop*, as a title of office, is properly applicable to a subordinate class of rulers, who possessing no independent powers of their own, are appointed to see that duties enjoined upon others are faithfully discharged. They differ from the higher order of magistrates in having no original authority, and in being confined to the supervision of others in the department committed to their care. They have no power to prescribe the law, they can only see that its precept is obeyed. Their functions seem to be exactly expressed by the English word "overseer." The subordinate magistrates sent out by Athens to take care of her interests in tributary cities were styled *episcopoi*.

Homer, to inculcate the doctrine that the gods will protect the sanctity of treaties, calls them the bishops of covenants. (Il. 22, 255.) Hector, as the guardian and defender of Troy, is lamented by Andromache, under the same title. (Il. 24, 729.) So in the LXX., in Numbers 31:14, officers of the host are "*episcopoi*" of the host. See also Judges 9:28, 30, where bishop and ruler of the city are the same; Nehemiah 11:9, 14; 22, a ruler of the specified division, not a teacher. In the Apocrypha, see I. Maccabees 1:57. The first meaning Hesychius gives to "*episcopus*," is "king."

Lastly: This is the sense in which our standards explain the term "presbyter." (See S. P. R., II, p. 59.) It says (Form of Government, c. iv, sec. 2, art. 1), that the reason why the pastor (or minister) is called *presbyter* is, that it is his duty to be grave and prudent, and an example of the flock, and to govern well in the house and kingdom of Christ. Compare this now with the reasons assigned for calling him "ambassador" or "steward," and nothing can be plainer than that of set purpose, our standards define presbyter in such a way as to make the definition as applicable to a ruling elder, as to a pastor (commonly so called). The preacher shares in common with the deacon the title of minister, because both are appointed to a service; and he shares, in common with the ruling elder, the title of presbyter, since both are appointed to rule. Our standards also quote I Tim. 5:17, in ch. 5, in proof of the divine right of the office of

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ruling elder, implying a judgment that presbyter means ruler. Neither the word of God, therefore, nor our standards countenance the notion that presbyter means preacher. See Gieseler, vol. 1, pp. 56, 57, &c., who contends that elder and bishop were the same, and that neither term had any reference to teaching. He goes too far, however, in asserting that the term is not used of those who did teach.

Here then we have one fundamental principle of Presbyterianism (see the traces of this doctrine even in Rome—Cunningham's Church Principles, p. 159, and Historical Theology, vol. 2, p. 251), a principle by which it is distinguished from other evangelical churches, to wit: that there is one order of presbyters or chosen rulers, that in this order there are two classes, like the *genus* and its co-ordinate species—1. presbyters who rule only; 2. presbyters who not only rule, but also labor in the word and doctrine; and both these classes entering into the composition of the church's parliamentary assemblies, we have an exemplification of the same principle which is exemplified in our civil legislatures by two houses, an expedient which is as great an improvement upon the representative principle as that principle is over the principle of the old democracy.

#### PRESBYTERIES—CONGREGATIONAL. B

See Owen, vol. 22, pp. 481 *et seq.*, for the principle in its application to a single congregation (which is the only visible church, which as an Independent he acknowledges). See Form of Government, ch. 5, sec. 3; R. J. Breckinridge's speech on Presbyterian Government not a Hierarchy but a Commonwealth; S. P. Review, II, pp. 20 *et seq.* In opposition on one hand to prelacy, which puts the government of the church into the hands of single men, and may therefore be called the monarchical form, and on the other to Congregationalism, which puts the government into the hands of the people or brotherhood, and may, therefore, be called a democracy; Presbyterianism is distinguished by a government in representative assemblies, and may therefore be called a republic or representative commonwealth. (Form of Government, c. v. sec. 1, art. 1.) We agree with Con-



gregationalists against the Prelatists in holding that the power of rule is a joint and not a several power, but we differ from the Congregationalists in this, that while they put the power in the hands of the people *en masse*, or in their deputies, we put the power in the hands of presbyters assembled in presbyteries, these presbyters being the chosen representatives of the people, yet, according to the principles already stated under the head of the "Subject of Church Power," deriving their authority from Christ the head of the church and the author of its constitution.

1. The first step in the proof is to show that there was a plurality of elders or bishops in every church in the times of the apostles. This is to be proved not only against the Prelatists, but against the Congregationalists also. The Congregationalists of England and of New England, as a general if not a universal rule, have but one elder, who is a teaching elder. (See "The Ruling Eldership," by Rev. David King, of Glasgow, Pittsburg United Presbyterian Board of Education, 1860). And many leading Congregationalists have contended that this was the practice in the primitive church, but leading Congregationalists, such as Dr. Wardlaw in his "Congregational Independency," Dr. Vaughan in his "Congregationalism," and Dr. Davidson in his "Ecclesiastic Polity," have of late years admitted (according to King, from whom these references are taken), that in the primitive church there was a plurality of elders in each church. They contend, however, that these elders were all preachers, which has been shown to be a mistake. If they will, however, carry out their own convictions and make a plurality of preaching elders in any church, they will soon find that circumstances will compel the most of their elders to become ruling elders only, and thus their organization will become practically the same as ours. But to the proof. (See Acts 11: 30, 14: 23, 15: 2, 4, 6, 22, 16: 4, 20: 17; 1 Tim. 5: 17; Phil. 1: 1; Titus 1: 5; 1 Peter 5: 1.) These references are taken from Owen's *Nature of a Gospel Church* Works 20, p. 481, and Owen was an Independent and not a Congregationalist. The argument from these passages is this: A plurality of elders or bishops is spoken of as existing in the church of Jerusalem, the church of Ephesus, the church of Philippi, &c. Now the word church in such passages means



either a particular church, a single congregation of the faithful, or it means a church consisting of several congregations united under one government. If it means a single congregation, then both Congregationalists and Prelatists must give up their theories; the former must assert that in every congregation, however small, there were many preachers, and admit, consequently, that their present practice is unscriptural in having only one. The latter must admit that there were several bishops in each congregation, and, therefore, that these bishops were not diocesan. If the word church in such passages, on the other hand, means several congregations united under one government, then the Independents must give up the distinctive principle of their sect, that a single congregation is the only visible church known to the New Testament; and the Prelatists must give up their principle that the church is governed by a single bishop instead of a presbytery. But this last point will appear more clearly hereafter. Here note that Schaff (see *Apostolic Church*, sec. 132, p. 526), although he differs from his master Neander as to the nature of the office denoted by the term presbyter, denying what Neander affirms, that presbyter denotes two classes of rulers—a teaching and non-teaching class—yet contends that in Acts 14: 23, Titus 1: 5, the force of *kata* is adverbial, not collective, and that the meaning, therefore, is that elders were ordained in each city (city by city, church by church,) not as Baur and others assert, one presbyter in each city or church.

2. The next step in the argument is to show that these elders in each church constituted a parliament or court for the government of said church, or in other words, that they ruled jointly and not severally. We argue this: *First*. From the nature of the case. If they were all rulers of equal authority there could be no decency or order in the exercise of their power except by agreement; that is, by an agreement of the majority. There must have been deliberation, conference, interchange of views, and a vote which made the action, the action of the whole governing body. (Compare Acts 15, the account of the proceedings of the council at Jerusalem.) *Second*. From 1 Tim. 4: 14, compared with Acts 22: 5 and Luke 22: 66. The



lexicographers (see Schleusner, *in voc.*) give as the meaning of *presbyterion* a college of elders, or a senate, implying an organized body, a corporate unit, of which the elements are presbyters. There can be no doubt of this being the meaning of the terms in Luke 22 and Acts 22, for in these places it denotes the sanhedrim, the highest court in the Jewish church and state. But in the place of I Timothy, so high an authority in Hebrew antiquities as Selden (*De Synedris* L. 1, c. 14, cited by Vitringa, *De Synag. Vit.* L. 2, c. 12), asserts that it means the presbyterate, the office of presbyter; as if Paul intended to say, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the imposition of hands, by which imposition thou wast made a presbyter, or endowed with the presbyterate." To this it is sufficient to reply: 1. That it is not very likely that a word which is used only in three places of the New Testament, should in two of them designate, beyond all doubt, a college or council of presbyters; and in the remaining one the office of a presbyter. So that while it is admitted, so far as the termination of the word is concerned, no argument can be made for one meaning or the other, the prevailing usage is in favor of a council or college of persons possessing the presbyterate and not the presbyterate itself. 2. A comparison of this passage with II Tim. 1: 6 (as Vitringa suggests in *loc. sup. cit.*), shows that the genitive here is not the genitive of the thing conferred, but of the body conferring; *mou* in this passage standing in the same relation to "hands" as "presbytery" does in the other. In the one, the gift is said to be conferred by the laying on of the hands of Paul; in the other, by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. *Presbyterion*, therefore, is the cause and not the effect of the imposition of hands. 3. This use is sanctioned by the writings of Ignatius, which the Prelatists are so fond of quoting, but which have been all proved to be forgeries. (Killin's *Ancient Church*; see citations in Vitringa as above cited.) He calls the presbyters of the Tralleian church the sanhedrim of God. Vitringa refers also to Theodoret, Chrysostom and Theophylact, as giving the interpretation which we have defended. Perhaps words terminating like *presbuterion* belong to the same class with such words as *prætorium*,



Jerome: "In ancient times the church was governed  
commune concilio presbyterorum."

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originally denoting the *place* of business. Some of this class of words might be transferred to denote the officer or body of officers doing business in the place. Sometimes again the fact of sitting together, or the mode of sitting, gives name to the body, as session, consistory, sanhedrim, or even the nature of the seat, as "divan" (cushion.) Compare the use of the word "church" for the body of believers and for the house where they assemble; also synagogue, &c., &c. Jerome seems to have had this word in his mind in that famous passage of his commentary on Titus 1: 7, which has excruciated so much the prelatial patrolaters. (See it in full in Gieseler, vol I, p. 56, note. *Idem est*, &c.)

We have thus proved that in the apostolic church the government of single congregations was in assemblies called presbyteries, because composed of presbyters—these presbyters being of two kinds, teaching and ruling elders. This is the very government which in modern times, among free nations, has been considered the most perfect, or to use the language of Milton, "the noblest, the manliest, the equalest, the justest government" on earth—a government by representatives, not by the people in *propria persona*, or by deputies, and these representatives not all of the same class, but of different classes, so that as the representative principle is itself a check upon the excesses of the democratic principle, the two classes of representatives constitute a check upon the evils incident to representation by one class.

Both these principles are recognized in the civil constitutions of this country—the principle of representation, and of representation by two classes of representatives, senators and representatives. The apostles seem to have put special honor on this government by sitting themselves as elders in settled churches, especially toward the close of their ministry, when the church was so far established as to be ready to pass out of the state of infancy and childhood into that of manhood. (I Cor. 13: 8-11; see Acts 15: 2, 4, 6, 22; II Tim. 1: 6; compare with I Tim. 4: 14; I Peter 5: 1.)

An incidental confirmation of this government by presbyteries may be derived from the concessions of Independents. These concessions are made in two ways. 1. In words. (Beside



the quotations from King in the beginning of this lecture, see Miller on ruling elders, chap. 7, who quotes largely both from English and New England Independents.) 2. In practice. (See Miller as before, ch. 8, page 186; King on the Eldership, Part I, pp. 27-32.) Although Independents contend that the discipline of the church is in the hands of the brotherhood by divine right, yet in practice they find that a promiscuous "church-meeting" is an assembly very unhappily constituted for judicial purposes; and the tendency has been to remedy the evil in one of two ways: 1. By making the pastor or elder sole ruler, *i. e.*, by converting the democracy into a monarchy. 2. Or by associating with the pastor a few of the most godly and prudent men in the congregation as an advisory committee—a sort of eldership, with the disadvantage of being unordained and unpledged to support the constitution. Dr. King gives some quotations from Independent writers, such as Davidson, James, Campbell, asserting for the pastor of a congregation a degree of power which Presbyterians would be very far from conceding to the pastors of their congregations. (See King on the Eldership, p. 15, foot note.) The more common method, however, is the second above-named—the selection of a committee. But this expedient, though a concession to our principles, is far from being as efficient or wholesome, for the very obvious reason that these *quasi* ruling elders are made by the pastor and not chosen by the people, and that they are temporary officers, not permanent, and for the reason already assigned that they are under no engagements of faithfulness to the constitution of the church. We might argue also from the concessions in words and in practice of Episcopalians. But I simply refer you to Miller on Ruling Elders, ch. 6 and ch. 7, p. 185, and on the Christian Ministry, ch. 8. That these presbyteries must consist of two sorts of presbyters, so far as the sphere of a particular congregation is concerned, is conceded by all who admit government by presbyteries at all. The only question upon this point concerns the higher courts, "classical" presbyteries in particular. I shall reserve therefore the discussion of this point till we reach the subject of the manner in which the idea of the unity of the church is realized in the Presbyterian government. Meanwhile note that our inquiries have led us to two



fundamental principles of Presbyterianism. 1. The principle of representative government—of government by parliamentary courts composed of presbyters duly appointed and ordained. 2. That these representatives must be of two classes belonging to the one order of *presbyters*. They all of them belong to the one order of rulers; and only as rulers, chosen rulers or representatives of the people, can they appear in any of these courts. Presbyters who rule only, and presbyters who both rule and labor in the word and doctrine. This answers to the two houses in modern legislation. Presbyteries are not divided, however, into two houses (each class of presbyters deliberating and voting separately), because presbyteries are courts, and are required to act as units. *Note* that the elders who rule only are called "representatives of the people," not because they only are representatives of the people and ministers are not, but because it is a complete description of their office.

Compare the use of the terms senator and representative. It does not imply that the Senate is not a body of representatives because the other house is called the House of Representatives. Both houses consist of representatives; the lower house of Congress is so called because the title is a complete description of their office.

#### PRESBYTERIES—CLASSICAL, SYNODICAL, GENERAL.

[See Form of Government, ch. 5, sec. 1, Arts. 1, 2; Confession of Faith, ch. 31, sec. 1. See also "Divine Right of Church Government," by the London ministers, Pt. II, chs. 13, 14, 15, p. 177, &c., of the New York edition of 1844, by R. Martin & Co. Dick's Theol. Lect. 99, vol. 2, pp. 448, et. seq., of Carter's edition, New York, 1851. Principal Hill's Theology, B. 6, ch. 2, sec. 2, pp. 591, et. seqq., of Hooker's edition, Philadelphia, 1844. Rutherford's Due Right of Presbyteries. Killen's Anct. Ch., p. 248, et. seqq., New York, Scribner, 1859; also of the same, pp. 605, et. seqq. Miller on Ruling Elders, ls. 1, 2, 3. R. J. Breckinridge's Sermon on the Christian Pastor, pp. 25, 26. See vol. labelled "Pamphlets," No. 4.]

All these sorts of presbyteries are named together, because



the same principle underlies them all. When we have once determined that two congregations (*cœtus fidelium*) can be connected together in government, we have demolished the fundamental principle of Independency, and established a fundamental principle of Presbyterianism. It is a matter of no consequence then how much the number of congregations may be increased, the principle upon which they are united is the same, and the arrangement of the courts, their number, extent of territory, &c., is an affair to be determined by human wisdom, accommodating its plans to the circumstances of the case, with a view to decency, order and general edification. Mountains, rivers, political divisions and other circumstances do and must modify our attempts to realize, in any external form, the idea of the unity of the church.

I. The principle which justifies the union of several congregations under one government, has just been suggested: it is *the unity of the church*. I am aware that the idea of unity can never be perfectly realized, in an external organization, upon earth, and the attempts which have been made for that purpose, from the days of Cyprian to the present, have only served to sacrifice the substance of unity to the shadow. Still the Independent and the Presbyterian cite with equal approval (see R. Hall's *Terms of Communion*, Works, p. 289, vol. I, Harper's ed., and Miller on R. Elders, p. 16), the splendid description by the Bishop of Carthage of the church as one. In the strict and proper sense, unity is an attribute of the church invisible, and existed in perfection only in the mystical body of Christ; yet even Independents acknowledge (see Hall, as above), that there ought to be some anxiety and some effort to exhibit it externally.

"Nothing can be more abhorrent," says this eloquent writer, "from the principles and maxims of the sacred oracles than the idea of a plurality of true churches, neither in actual communion with each other, nor in a capacity for such communion," and well may he say so. (See Eph. 4: 3-6; I Cor. 12: 12, &c., 10: 17; John 17, *passim*. See Mason on the Church, No. 1, "Plea for Communion," P. I, pp. 9, *et seq.* So glaring is this doctrine of the unity of the church even as a visible church catholic, in the sacred scriptures, that it is unconsciously recog-



nized even by those Christians whose church organizations proceed upon a denial of it. They talk habitually of the church, the faith of the church, the worship of the church, the sufferings of the church, God's dealings with his church, and a thousand like things. Let them ask what they mean by such expressions? They will not say "a particular congregation;" and if they say "the election of grace," they will speedily contradict themselves, and fact, and the word of God too. (Mason). The unhappy division of the church into sects has been the chief means of obscuring the idea of her unity; and, therefore, in this discussion we confine ourselves to one denomination, or to the church before sects existed. The question then is, is the visible church one in any such sense as to warrant the union of two or more congregations under the same government? I answer in the affirmative, for the following reasons:

1. From the nature and ends of church fellowship. The union of believers with Christ and each other is the source of communion with each other. This communion is involuntary where the union is real. As a man cannot help feeling sympathy with his fellow-men because he and they possess the same nature—as one member of the body cannot help sympathizing with the other members because they possess the same life, so one believer *must* sympathize with other believers. It is the very nature of spiritual life which they all possess in common. God has made them so. But as God has ordained the family and the state that the natural fellowship of men may be expressed and strengthened, so he has ordained the church that the fellowship he has instituted among his people may be promoted by joining in the observance of common ordinances of worship, and by obedience to common rules of government. They all have the same end in view, the glory of God in their own salvation and the salvation of mankind. Every Christian is as much interested in the consistent walk and the growth in grace of every other Christian as he is in his own; and is therefore as much concerned in the purity of the faith and the holiness of the life of other congregations as he is in those of his own. In the matter, for example, of the character of ministers of the word, their training, their soundness in doctrine, their godliness, they all are



equally interested. Why not then commit the whole affair of examining, licensing, ordaining, installing, removing and judging ministers to a body of presbyters representing all the congregations within a certain district and common to them all? Again, in cases of conscience, in questions of doctrine or discipline which are of common concern to all the congregations, is there not the same reason for having such matters decided by a court representing all, as there is for Christians of a single congregation uniting in submission to a court of their own in ordinary cases of discipline? So also in the application of the rules of discipline to particular cases. The presbytery in a particular church is sometimes so small, or the members so liable to bias and prejudice by reason of their relationship to parties in a cause, as to make it inexpedient for the court to issue, if not to investigate the cause; and there ought to be a provision by which the cause can be "referred" (Rules of Discipline, ch. 13, sec. 2,) to a court representing a larger section of the church, or several congregations. Or the session of a particular church may, through ignorance or unfaithfulness, take no steps to institute process, or in conducting process may violate the moral or legal rights of accused parties, or may, in issuing a case, violate the plainest dictates of justice. There ought to be, therefore, provisions made for "reviewing" (Rules of Discipline, ch. 13, sec. 1), or judging by "appeal" (sec. 3 of same chapter), or "complaint" (sec. 4) by some higher court, the doings of the lower. These principles are acknowledged in the constitution of the judiciary in every free commonwealth. The necessity of some such arrangement is more clearly seen in the matter of the discipline of ministers of the gospel for heresy or immorality (specially the former) than in anything else. Heresiarchs are generally plausible, and if the responsibility of judging a minister rests upon a single congregation, or upon the rulers thereof, it is not difficult to see how unequal the contest is likely to be between truth and justice on the one hand, and error or even immorality combined with talents and personal popularity on the other. The history of congregationalism in this country is very instructive upon this point. It has shown itself powerless either to prevent or to remedy the inroads of error. Once more: the church is not



merely to maintain itself but to extend itself. Its great vocation is to be a witness for Christ, and the sphere of its testimony is no narrower than the world. How can it accomplish its missionary work except by union? For all purposes of aggression, unity of counsel and effort is the first and fundamental prerequisite. This is equally illustrated in the history of Jesuitism and Methodism. I grant that in these instances efficiency in aggression has been purchased at too great an expense. The individuality of the laborers has been impaired and almost destroyed. Still extreme cases illustrate best the operation of principles. An autocracy is more efficient in a war of invasion than a democracy. Popery and Methodism have gone everywhere in this country. Congregationalism has been established only where Congregationalists have gone before in large numbers. Congregationalism can conduct foreign missions only by *irresponsible* boards of commissions or associations. Presbyterianism conducts them through its regular courts, which are representative bodies, and it is the only system which combines efficiency of aggressive operations with the full preservation and development of individual life. Its members are not mere spokes in a wheel; they are wheels within a wheel. The missionary work is an essential part of the calling of the church; union under one government is essential to the proper prosecution of this work. *Ergo*, &c.

2. From the concessions of Independents. *First*, in words. (See Owen's True Nature of a Gospel Church, ch. XI.) This whole chapter, it seems to me, is a concession to Presbyterian principles: and is conclusive only against the Prelatical notions of the unity of the church, and especially the Papal. See the last paragraph in the chapter, in which, after discussing the nature of the Synod at Jerusalem (Acts, 15), he says, "Hence it will," &c., every word of which a Presbyterian might adopt, not excepting the words "voluntary consent." (See C. of F., ch. XXXI., § 2.) *Second*, in universal practice: As they are compelled to imitate Presbyterians on the scale of a single congregation (see Lect. on Cong'l Presbyteries): so also on the larger scale of districts containing many congregations, they have their associations, consociations, conferences, &c., which practically attempt the work of Presbyteries, with the disadvantages already



indicated of putting the power in the hands of men who have no official authority, and are under no official responsibility. It is a painful evidence of the power of prejudice that a man like Owen could lay down the principles touching church power so clearly, and contend for the divine warrant of Synods to the extent of asserting that their decrees "are to be received, owned and observed, not only on the evidence of the mind of the Holy Ghost in them," but also on the ministerial authority of the Synod itself, (see place above cited,) and yet hold that they have no power of censure (judicial) or excommunication, and that it belongs not to the rulers of the church, as rulers, to be members of such synods, but to private members as well, provided they be delegated thereunto by the people.

3. From Scripture. The federal character of the government of Israel, combining unity with the full development of tribal and individual life. Force of the words "congregation of Israel." The word "church," (*ἐκκλησία*) has already been noticed as equivalent, in LXX., to the word rendered "congregation" in ours, and as the term "congregation," in the Old Testament, denotes the whole body of the visible people of God, so the term "church," in the New. But here the Independents join issue with us. They deny that the term, when used in the singular number, and in application to a visible body, ever denotes anything larger than a single congregation. It is necessary, therefore, to argue this point a little. I. The phrase "church," of or at "Jerusalem," occurs several times in the Acts. See 2: 47; 8: 1; 11: 22; 15: 4. II. The church of Jerusalem must have consisted of several congregations. Argued. (1.) From the multitude of believers. Acts, 2: 41, 47; 4: 4; 5: 14; 6: 1, &c., v. 7. These notices refer to the church before the dispersion upon the persecution which arose after the death of Stephen; and the number of believers could not have been much, if any, short of 10,000. After the dispersion we have notices like the following: 9: 31; 21: 20; "*ποσαι μυριαδες*" "how many tens of thousands." (2.) From the manner of meeting among the primitive Christians. This was not in spacious halls built for the purpose, but in dwelling-houses, chambers, upper rooms, &c. Acts, 1: 13; 2: 46; 12: 5, with v. 12; 19: 9; 20: 8. Rom., 16: 5. (Div. Gov't,



by Lond. Ministers.)\* (3.) The church is represented as one body, in the New Testament, "*fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth.*" (Eph., 4: 16). As this is the church to which is given the ministry, (v. 11, &c.,) it must be the church visible; and it is just as natural to consider these "bands" and "joints" as designating the means by which different congregations are united in the same confederation, as it is to consider them the means of union to the individual members of the same church, particular or single. (Killen, p. 250.) (4.) This doctrine of the visible unity of the church seems to have been sanctioned by the practice of the apostles. See Acts, 8: 14; 11: 22; where they are represented as acting in concert, although, from the very nature of the apostolic office, each was a governor of the whole church.

4. A fourth general argument may be taken from the Jewish Synagogue. It is conceded, even by candid opponents of the Presbyterian system, "that the church did really derive its polity from the synagogue, and that it is a fact, upon the proof of which, in the present state of theological learning, it is needless to expend many words," (see Litton's Church of Christ, cited by Killen, p. 251,) and this accounts for the fact that in the New Testament there is no formal statement in regard to the constitution of the Christian church, just as there is no formal explanation of the meaning of the word Christ or Messiah. Killen gives, out of standard authors, (Selden, Lightfoot, &c.,) the following account of the government of the synagogue, (p. 251, et seq.): Every Jewish congregation was governed by a bench of elders; and in every city there was a small sanhedrim or presbytery, consisting of 23 members, to which the neighboring synagogues were subject. Jerusalem is said to have had two of these small sanhedrims, as it was found that the multitude of cases arising among so vast a population were more than sufficient to occupy the time of any one judicatory. Appeals lay from all these tribunals to the great sanhedrim, or "council," so frequently mentioned in the New Testament. (Luke, 22: 66; Acts, 5: 21; 6: 15; Prideaux's Con., Part II, Book 7.) This court consisted of 70 or 72 members, made up, perhaps, in equal portions, of chief-priests, scribes, and elders of



the people. (Matt., 16: 21; 26: 59; Mark, 15: 1.) The chief-priests were probably 24 in number—each of the 24 courses into which the sacerdotal order was divided, (I Chron., 24: 4; 7: 18,) thus furnishing one representative. The scribes were the men of learning, like Gamaliel (Acts, 5: 34), who had devoted themselves to the study of the Jewish law, and who possessed recondite as well as extensive information. The elders were laymen (?) of reputed wisdom and experience, who, in practical matters, might be expected to give sound advice. \* \* \* Our Lord himself, in the Sermon on the Mount, is understood to refer to the great council and its subordinate judicatures, (Matt., 5: 22;) and in the Old Testament, appeals from inferior tribunals to the authorities in the holy city, are explicitly enjoined. (Deut., 17: 8-10; 2 Chron., 19: 8-11; Psalms, 122: 5.) All the synagogues, not only in Palestine, but in foreign countries, obeyed the orders of the sanhedrims at Jerusalem, and it constituted a court of review to which all other ecclesiastical arbiters yielded submission. (See, also, Miller on R. E., c. 2. p. 31, et seq.)

These principles and facts undoubtedly explain and harmonize all the notices of the New Testament in regard to elders, and the organization of the church, better than the theories of Independents or Prelatists, although it may be conceded that absolute certainty cannot be reached upon these points as it can be in regard to those articles of faith which are fundamental and necessary to salvation. And, hence, while we contend for the scriptural order of Christ's house, as a matter of faith and of vast importance to the prosperity and efficiency of the church, we do not unchurch and remit to the uncovenanted mercies of God, those who, holding the head, yet differ from us upon these points.

We have thus reached, in the course of our inquiries, a third distinctive feature of Presbyterian church government—the mode in which it realizes the unity of the church. It realizes this idea by the *elasticity* of its parliamentary representative system. If there was but one congregation on earth, its presbytery or “session,” would be the parliament of the whole church; if half-a-dozen, the representatives from each would constitute a parliament for the whole church; if a still larger number, the same re-



sults would follow. And representatives from all the churches, (or from the smaller parliaments, which is the same principle,) constitute the parliament for the whole church. Only two churches on the earth realize this idea of church unity—Rome and our own church. But these are the poles apart as to the system by which they realize it. Rome, with her infallible Pope at the head, and with graded authorities extending over the whole earth, one class subservient to another, and all to the Pope, secures a terrible unity, binding all, abjectly, to a single throne. Our system, on the other hand, secures unity in consistency with the most perfect freedom. (S. P. R., vol. 13, p. 383, July, 1860.) Presbyterianism may, therefore, be thus defined: The government of the church by parliamentary assemblies, composed of two classes of presbyters, and of presbyters only, and so arranged as to realize the visible unity of the whole church. (See S. P. Review, '61, p. 782.)

II. In the light of these principles we recognize the truth of the statement of the fundamental principles of Presbyterianism contained in the note to F. of G. B. 1, ch. 12, in the old book. If all the communicants in the Presbyterian church of the United States could meet for worship in the same place, they might and should be under the government of the same session; but as this is impossible, they are broken up into single congregations, each with its own session. But in order to preserve the unity, all these single or local presbyteries are ultimately combined by representation in one presbytery, which we call the general assembly, passing through the intermediate stages of classical and synodical presbyteries. Of this general assembly we might say, in the language of Milton (Reason of Church Government against Prelaty, ch. 6), "every parochial consistory is a right homogeneous and constituting part, being in itself a little synod, and towards a general assembly moving upon her own basis in an even and firm progression, as those smaller squares in battle unite in one great cube, the main phalanx, an emblem of truth and steadfastness." It is not one order of clergy rising above another like the gradations in the Roman hierarchy, but a larger square of the same order of presbyters, including a smaller, until the "great cube" is reached. The subordination is not that of



original jurisdiction over private members, elders, & deacons belong to the session. Our ministers belong to the Presbytery - is merely conventional.

inferior officers to superior; but of a smaller body to a larger body of officers of the same order—the smaller constituting a part of the larger. Now in regard to this series of courts it is important to observe: 1. As has already been noted, it is a matter of conventional arrangement, founded upon expediency, how many and how large these courts shall be, how often they shall meet, how they shall be constituted; that is, of what number of elders and how many of each class, how many shall constitute a quorum, &c., &c. 2. That as appellate jurisdiction must belong to the courts above the sessions or congregational presbytery, it is also a matter of convention or of constitutional arrangement how this appellate jurisdiction shall be distributed and regulated; subject of course to the principle of a larger reviewing the doings of the smaller part, and consequently of the highest appellate jurisdiction belonging to the highest court, which is allowed appellate jurisdiction at all. 3. That in matters of original jurisdiction every court has, prior to any constitutional distribution of power, all the power that any court has. The presbytery does not derive its powers from the session, nor the synod from the presbytery, nor the general assembly from synods or presbyteries in an ascending scale, nor the synod from the general assembly, &c., in a descending scale. But as every court is a presbytery composed of presbyters of two classes, it is clothed with all the powers of government. So that a session might ordain and send out missionaries and the general assembly might examine and receive members into the communion of the church if these powers had not been distributed in the constitution. The sphere of the several courts therefore in matters of original jurisdiction is not determined by the places they occupy in the scale, but by the definitions of the constitution. This is an important principle to the freedom and independence of the courts.

The dictum by which the unity of the church, the power of the parts, and the power of the whole over the particular parts, are expressed is as follows: "The power of the whole is in every part, and the power of the whole is over the power of every part." The power of the Presbyterian Church of the United States is in the general assembly, the synod, the presbytery, the ses-



sion, and the power of the general assembly is over the power of the synod, presbytery and session. This last expression is intended to preserve the rights and powers belonging to the lower courts (guaranteed by the constitution). The general assembly has no power directly *over the part*, but only over the *power* of the part, which implies that the part has a power. Compare the civil commonwealth. The commonwealth of Virginia appears in all its parts or courts as a party and judge in every criminal cause, and as a judge only in every civil suit. This fact is the ground of the provisions for appeals, complaints (bills of exceptions), references, (change of venue), &c. See the action of Assembly, 1879, on the overture of Atlanta presbytery on worldly amusements, answer to third question.



# Subject of Church Power.

(Materia in qua)

Papal Position - that this power resides both in the first act  
in primo actu, quoad esse, virtualiter) and in the second act  
in secundo actu, quoad operari, actualiter) in the clergy. They  
right of the people to elect their pastors. Papal Syllabus  
Congregational Syllabus, Presby. Syllabus - See  
Manuscript Notes p 166.







